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## WOMEN'S WAR WORK





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## PREFACE

**W**HEN the world is convulsed by war, the most violent of human activities, it is only natural that the soldier, the embodiment of that activity, should occupy the foremost place in people's minds, and that patriotism which takes the form of fighting should make the most direct and universal appeal to sympathy and help.

The following pages describe from various points of view another form of patriotism. Women, with a few rare and romantic exceptions, do not serve their country in the firing line, but their work in war time is all the same of the highest value to the State. This book has been compiled with the object of showing how that work has been done in the belligerent countries and in America. It should be interesting from the fact that each chapter represents the knowledge and opinions of different people, related in their own way.

The response made by women, all over the world, to the great and increasing demands on their energies, has not been unrecognized. In France, in England, and in Russia alike, ministers have publicly declared that the women have been splendid. Mr. Asquith, referring in the House of Commons to what they had already



accomplished, added that he believed they could do even more in the future by releasing thousands and tens of thousands of men, and undertaking their jobs. This the Prime Minister thought would mean gigantic and at the same time rapid strides towards the solution of one of our most pressing problems. In Russia, State recognition of woman's war work has gone so far as to secure special edicts from the Czar.

The Press in all countries has commented with pride on the way women have organized themselves for war service. It is one of the virtues of war that it puts the light, which in peace time is hid under a bushel, in such prominence that all can see it. Few seem to realize that women have only transferred their usual activities to new channels; the latent energy was there, but is now developed and extended. Yet I would not deny that there is a new spirit abroad. Take the work done by women in nursing the wounded, which naturally occupies a large space in these pages. If we recall the time—sixty years ago—when Florence Nightingale's efforts to organize war nursing were met, not only with opposition, but with abuse and contempt, we become conscious of the vast change which has taken place in the status of the "ministering angel." "No soldier she, yet not unused to war, nor fearful of its horrors—death and wounds and pestilence." And the more that has been accepted of women in hospital work, the more they have been ready to give.

The traditional task of tending the wounded has been undertaken by thousands, and that is

not all. The Board of Trade has recently made arrangements for women to serve under the War Office in certain departments of military hospitals, in order that men may be released for other work. And women are now employed as cooks, store-keepers, and dispensers, and in various clerical work. Apart from this development, another new epoch for women is undoubtedly at hand; women doctors are filling the gaps in the medical profession, and are certainly doing their work admirably. We are told the shortage will increase, and if the war continues still longer there will be an even greater need for women doctors.

In the sphere of science women have also done their part. In France Madame Curie, of radium fame, has put herself at the disposal of the French military authorities. Motoring from hospital to hospital, she organized the treatment her discovery has made possible. An Englishwoman, Miss Mary Davies, voluntarily inoculated herself with the bacillus of gas-gangrene, in order that doctors might be able to test fairly a new antidote. She undertook her heroic action with a full knowledge of the risk, as for some years she had been a bacteriologist at the Pasteur Institute. It is nothing new for women to show courage, devotion, and self-sacrifice, but this heroine of science is essentially a modern product.

The women who are working in the active zone as nurses, or in the many hospitals at home, are to be envied, for they have the exhilarating feeling that they are on active service; there is no doubt that where we can only imagine, the

work is harder than when we have the actuality before our eyes.

In considering the attitude and work of the majority of women in England, we should remember that the position is not quite the same as in other countries. It is essential to take into account that France and Russia have conscription, which simplifies the issue, helping women to see their duty in war time—and to do it. The French woman, for example, has only to face the inevitable bravely, whereas the English woman has to bear, in addition to separation, anxiety and possible loss, the cruel responsibility of influencing the man's decision. Might not this be another plea for conscription—that word so many fight shy of, and yet which means nothing worse than summoning together.

That the labour problem is also simplified by national service is fairly obvious. It stands to reason that whatever the feelings of men in reference to women's competition in the labour market may be in peace time, in war time they know and expect that women will automatically take their places. One of the striking effects of war conditions has been the number of women employed in industrial occupations. But in this country under the voluntary system this is still a novelty and a surprise. Women in France and in Germany were making shells during the first month of the war, and were prepared to do so. Whereas in England women have only lately been employed, notwithstanding the great demand for female labour in the munition factories.

English women certainly do not suffer by com-

parison with women of other nationalities in respect of physical courage. In France, in Flanders, in Serbia, there have been innumerable instances of bravery and endurance under fire in the field hospitals, and in the often-shelled hospitals at the base ; and I have no doubt that if English nurses were allowed in the firing line as they are in Russia, we should hear of deeds of heroism equal to that glorious one recorded of the Russian nurse Mareya Ivanovna. She, it will be remembered, when all the officers of a battalion were killed and the men showed signs of being demoralized, rallied them, and leading a charge, fell, mortally wounded at the moment of victory, having earned the Cross of St. George, and undying glory.

Patriotism is not the property of any one nation, and probably there has been no factor in Germany's organization of her resources more powerful than the spirit shown by her women. The chapter in this book dealing with German and Austrian women is necessarily short, but it indicates well enough that they are supporting the men in the field with a fervour and self-sacrifice which we ought to admire, since we can hardly take up the attitude that what is a virtue in us is a vice in the enemy.

It is a source of pride to me personally that the women of America have proved, as President Grant said, "that their hearts are always ready to respond to the call of suffering humanity." The record of what they have done not only in England, but in other countries, speaks for itself.

It is perhaps premature to speculate on the effect the war will have on the position of women in

the future. There can be no doubt that they have learned much through the services they have rendered—through their mistakes and failures as well as through their successful achievements, and that they will learn much more before Peace is restored.

Although this book does not profess to chronicle in its entirety all the work done by women in war time, it is an honest attempt to grapple with some of its issues, and therefore I hope the Public will welcome it.

JENNIE RANDOLPH CHURCHILL.

# WOMEN'S WAR WORK

## CHAPTER I

### THE QUEEN TAKES THE LEAD

“**T**HE Queen held the women workers of England together in the early days of the War,” said a prominent social worker who knows all there is to know about the world of philanthropy.

This is a big claim, but if you think for a minute what the Queen's plan involved when she formed her Work for Women Fund, you will realize that it is a just and true statement.

At that time men were going off to the front, leaving many trades short-handed. In another direction, numbers of women who had devoted their skill to the claims of dress and fashion, or had helped to entertain us or provide us with luxuries, were flung down workless and helpless. In truth, when the harsh blast of the war bugle for recruits sounded through the land, it seemed as if working women everywhere were to be thrown out of employment to face misery, want, hardship, and despair. Briefly, in August, 1914, the whole industrial machinery of Great Britain may be said to have been cruelly jarred and shaken, and, to those who looked with seeing eyes, a great deal

trembled in the balance. There was need for quick action,

Naturally many women came forward and offered to nurse the wounded, or hurried away to France to offer their services. This was noble work that to-day we can unreservedly admire, for courageous women left luxurious surroundings without one regretful sigh, and shirked no hardship to help their country and their country's brave defenders in the sudden hour of need. But it was characteristic of the Queen that she thought at once of the women workers in the shadow and the silence. These poor women, upon whom not one single ray of limelight fell, were to matter much to England's future. Her warm sympathy prompted her to help them on the instant; the ordinary workaday world, she saw, must be quickly and skilfully readjusted. Women must be taught new trades. How could money be spent better than in "paying them to learn"? Miracles must not be asked or expected. Time must be given, and so must thought and money, if the women, who now shivered at the black darkness of a future that showed no opportunity for them, were to be put in the way of earning a living.

It was a queenly scheme, but patience, tenderness, and generosity are qualities that Queen Mary has always shown, yet never did she put these attributes to more splendid use in her country's service than when the Queen's Work for Women Fund was started.

Of this organization Lady Roxburghe was appointed Honorary Secretary and Mrs. C. Arthur

Pearson the Honorary Treasurer, while Miss Mary Macarthur, with her intimate knowledge of the always difficult path of the industrial woman-worker, came forward to advise and direct the Central Committee.

At 33, Portland Place, the house lent by Lord Blyth to Her Majesty for the Work for Women Fund Head-quarters, there were gathered together numbers of capable women busy all day long in the work of organization. To their untiring efforts and their keen, human interest the whole nation owes earnest thanks for the splendid work that was and is being accomplished there with vigilance and promptness.

The aims of the Fund are so numerous that it is impossible to describe them all here in detail. One thing is certain. No woman is turned away unheard, unhelped, or unfed. To the seamstress and milliner, sewing is handed to be done at Trade Union rates. Typists, actresses, tea-shop girls, and any other worker who has lost her occupation through the war, can apply and be sure of help.

"I 'ardly 'ad the nerve to go," said a young girl who had been on the variety stage in a troupe of acrobats, "for I couldn't do anything useful. But they smiled at me ever so kind, and one lady in furs sez, 'Oh, we wants such as you to learn.' So I felt all right after that."

The directors asked her in which direction her fancies lay, and she chose to be taught the mysteries of toy-making with excellent results.

Other women are anxious to learn the domestic



arts: cooking, washing, and laundering; while some hanker after open-air employment, and find a new joy in life out in the country, in working on the land, in some cases fruit-farming, in others devoting their time to nursery-garden work.

But wherever the occupation is new, the women and girls are "paid to learn." Threepence an hour is given with good meals and expert tuition! It reads like a fairy tale to the woman who has been at close grips with real poverty, but it is sound common-sense and national economy. It means that the mothers of the next generation can become capable, dependable women—women who can train their families worthily and well, while those on the Fund who do not marry, will find the benefit of this training as workers in the future. Married or single, these trained women must prove a strength to their country long after the War is finished.

The colonies, too, recognize the value of this scheme, for the Central Committee puts the workers in touch with the British Women's Emigration Association when this seems advisable.

Thus Australia invited Queen Mary to send over five hundred and fifty out-of-work girls. These girls had to promise to go into domestic service for a twelvemonth, and to pay the Association £2 out of wages received in the new country. Beyond this only £1 had to be paid, and this expense the Queen's Fund met, giving each girl an outfit—made in the Guild sewing-rooms—and an extra sovereign for "cash in hand" on landing. These situations proved splendid chances for

enterprising girls who were not afraid of hard work.

One of the triumphs of the Queen's Work for Women Fund is that its band of organizers make everything clear as daylight to the women who have to be helped. No matter if a girl be stupid, helpless even, for all the applicants have not had equal educational advantages—there is always kindly patience ready, always a friendly desire to explain and to aid. The Work for Women Fund exhibits clearly the genius of the educated woman, who is quick to seize upon possible opportunities and to point the way to others of her sex less fortunately placed.

Before the war, Princess Mary was to have had a gay season in 1914, culminating in a Fancy Dress State Ball. When the war broke out all these social plans were cancelled, and the Princess entered heart and soul into her mother's schemes for the relief of the women and girls who were plunged in dire and sudden distress. She interested herself at once in the suggested Princess Mary Gift Book, and gave more personal thought to its compilation than many of the reading public realize. It was said that, unlike the pattern girl of the improving story book, she never was "fond of her needle," but now she is always ready and eager to work for the men in the trenches, for their children at home, and for the Belgian refugees.

One of the things all women love in the Queen is that she is not content to organize, direct, and give "money from a well-filled store," but offers her personal service. And in this Princess Mary

resembles the Queen. Every year Queen Mary knits woollen vests and other garments for the Needlework Guild, in addition to the work she pays to have done. And now, in these days of war, Her Majesty has a piece of work—vest, muffler, mitten, sock, or body-belt—in every one of the royal apartments, so that she may take up her work anywhere if she finds herself with an odd minute of leisure.

Princess Mary is said to have made “yards and yards of mufflers” since August, 1914. It was entirely her own idea to send a Christmas present to every soldier and sailor fighting for our Empire. The brass box with her portrait embossed upon the lid, the wording of the Christmas card, the choice of the gifts—cigarettes, matches, tobacco or pipe—every little detail she thought out.

In the second month of 1915 Princess Mary had another very happy thought. Some of our broken warriors who could never hope to fight again, had been sent home to England in exchange for a like number of disabled Germans. The Princess remembered that these men would have received no gift from her at Christmas time, so she went herself to visit them in the Queen Alexandra Military Hospital, and gave them presents from her Christmas Fund.

“I like her serious smile,” said one young officer afterwards, a lad who, although he had lost a leg and an arm, was still gay and debonair. “Princess Mary makes you feel she’s a girl who really cares!”

Queen Alexandra has also worked very hard.

In our chapter about War-Nursing her name will occur again and again amongst those who with the Imperial Service Sisters, the Naval Nurses, and the Red Cross Legions, have ever been eager to alleviate the lot of the wounded.

Writing in a preface to a record of Red Cross work, the Queen-Mother thanks every individual nurse—"I and the whole nation," she says, "owe them an undying and unfailing debt of gratitude."

"Queen Alexandra thinks of everything." Early in February, 1915, she ordered betimes a great quantity of shamrock sprigs for the Front, so that our Irish fighters should be cheered by this little remembrance from her when St. Patrick's Day came round. Not long ago she stopped her motor so that she, with Princess Victoria, might watch a game of football which some khaki-clad Tommies were enjoying not far from the banks of the Serpentine. The same evening a subscription was sent by her to the fund for giving footballs to the boys in training. No one had recognized the two royal ladies, for the soldiers were intent upon their game.

Princess Victoria has been busy in war-time activities on her own account, cutting out garments and paying out-of-work dressmakers to make them up. With Queen Alexandra the Princess has interested herself in many other valuable war projects.

Early in the New Year of 1915, a charming little landscape painted by the Queen-Mother was sold in aid of the War Relief Funds. At Queen Alexandra's Field Force Fund, which has its head-

quarters in Knightsbridge, Society women are daily at work, packing parcels for the men at the Front. The idea of this Fund is to sort out the many and varied gifts sent in and to make up useful all-round parcels that shall meet every need of the recipient. Lady French, who is working in so many ways, is the President, and the Countess of Bective, the Duchess of Portland, Lady Henry Cavendish-Bentinck, Lady Horner, Lady Baird and others, are also active helpers.

The grateful letters they receive make them feel that this sorting-out process is not wasted effort. One delighted soldier, after explaining in downright prose that up till then, though he'd had enough mufflers to clothe a regiment, he'd never been able to "catch hold of a pair of socks," was moved to burst into verse on the subject. This is how the grateful warrior sang his thanks :

" My parcel has come, and inside, oh, I say !  
What soldier could wish for a better array ?  
There are gloves for the hands and socks for the feet,  
And a soap and a towel to make one look neat."

Queen Alexandra is specially interested in the efforts that are being made on behalf of our blinded soldiers. The scheme originated with Mr. C. Arthur Pearson's Committee for the Care of the Blind, and she wrote saying how glad she was to feel that the future welfare of the brave men, so cruelly disabled in this terrible war, was being provided and planned for with wisdom and every possible care.

Distressed variety artists have been helped by Queen Alexandra, who has shown practical interest

in many branches of the work done by the Women's Emergency Corps. Her Majesty gives so quietly, that few people heard anything about her magnificent gift of £1000 to be divided at Christmas time in 1914 amongst twenty of the poorest districts of London, or the generous help that she has afforded for many literary men and women—artists, musicians, actors, and others of the creative professions who felt suddenly the pinch of want.

Princess Christian is another untiring royal worker. For years she has shown the deepest interest in soldiers and sailors disabled in their country's service, and has loyally supported the Soldiers' and Sailors' Self-Help Society. In the South African War Princess Christian did much hospital work, sending out an ambulance train; and since the outbreak of this war she has again been doing all in her power to help the sick and the wounded at the battle-front.

Princess Patricia, the Duke of Connaught's sweet-faced daughter, made and presented the Colour borne by the Canadian regiment that has, in France, already carried her name to Glory's Scroll of Honour. "Princess Pat's Pets," they are called—these boys who have been mentioned in despatches and done so bravely in fight after fight, and they think the world of their "own Princess." She just suits the Canadian lad, with her love of sport and outdoor life.

"She can skate, sleigh, and ice-sail with the best," said one young officer in the regiment that bears her name. "She's not a figure-head Princess,

but a real bit of live inspiration. No wonder the other chaps envy us ! ”

Class distinction has gone for good from philanthropic work. Women have found in war-time usefulness a common platform on which they meet in friendly service.

Life can never be unreal if hearts are daily outpoured in loyal service, and nothing less than this outpouring, deep, free, and without measure, has been the answer of Great Britain's women to the call of their Queen.

## CHAPTER II

### FRESH ACTIVITIES AT HOME

**I**N many an office and shop nowadays the female staff is bearing heavier burdens than ever before, because so much of the work which usually falls to the men must, in their absence, be carried on by the women. If our girls are to stand the extra strain without injury, their health must be built up to the highest possible point, and in this connection there is nothing more valuable than regular and carefully thought out exercise, which will brace up all the muscles grown flabby from much sitting, and give the general air of well-being which follows sound physical activities.

Yet how few girls ever have this necessary exercise, and how many round shoulders and white faces one sees among this class of worker. The teacher hurries to and from school, the business girl goes to her work by tube or tram, and home again in the evening. Nine out of ten workers sit about till bedtime, hardly using their muscles from one week's end to the next.

For some hundreds of girls, at any rate, the war changed this unhealthy mode of living, for they joined the Women's Volunteer Reserve, an organization that insisted sternly on physical



culture. This branch of the varied activities of the Women's Emergency Corps was founded in August, 1914, and did for girl workers roughly what the Boy Scout movement had long been doing for their schoolboy brothers. Though started in time of war, with a war motive behind it all, the Reserve soon showed that it is likely to live on long after peace is signed, as a permanent organization and club for young women workers.

The immediate object of the Reserve was to train a body of girls who, expert, disciplined, and efficient, could do much to stem panic in the event of a German raid by sky or sea. In the same way as the Boy Scouts, in time of need these feminine recruits agreed to act as messengers, despatch riders, signallers, first-aid workers, and generally make the old and helpless of any attacked locality their particular care. They were to see to the removal of the aged and invalids to places of safety, and undertook other necessary tasks which might be overlooked by the ordinary civilian population in the event of a sudden attack.

For responsible work of this sort it was evident that severe and systematic training was needed, and this was afforded to the members of the Volunteer Reserve by a series of evening classes and drills arranged at various local centres in London and provincial towns. The organization was worked on a strictly military basis, with the Marchioness of Londonderry as Colonel-in-Chief, and the Hon. Evelina Haverfield as Honorary Colonel. These two commanders, with the Staff Officers, formed

the Head-quarters Committee in Baker Street, and had control of the whole movement. On Mrs. Haverfield's departure for service with a nursing unit, she was succeeded in the Coloneley by Mrs. Charlesworth.

The rank and file formed battalions, each of which was governed by a Lieutenant-Colonel, with a Major as second in command. Each battalion was divided into eight companies, with a Captain and two Lieutenants acting as the commissioned officers in each. Recruits paid an entrance fee of a shilling, and had to attend a certain number of drills before they were pronounced efficient and drafted into the various companies.

It must not be thought that drill was the only sort of training given to this little army of keen, intelligent workers. There were classes for every sort of information likely to be of use in an emergency. The girls learned several methods of signalling, for instance, and there were numerous lectures on first-aid and home nursing. Fencing was an exercise that was taken up with great vigour, and many girls were eager to practise shooting, though of course they would never, in any circumstances, carry fire-arms themselves. A park at Woking was generously lent for a summer camp, so classes on camp cookery attracted many, and wonderful were the concoctions made over an open-air fire ! They counted among their numbers not a few motor-cyclists and motor drivers, whose services in a time of sudden danger could be counted upon without doubt.

The enthusiasm of the girls showed how real a want was supplied by the Reserve. Many attended four or five nights a week, winning rapid promotion, which was always from the ranks, and what was more valuable, made wonderful gains in health and spirits. All over the country the movement spread, and soon there were branches in towns as far apart as Guildford and Gateshead, Brighton and Worcester. Birmingham had a specially high record, for Mrs. Haverfield's first recruiting meeting held there brought in seven hundred members to the ranks.

It is interesting to note, from a health point of view, that the movement was warmly approved by women doctors, many of whom attended the evening classes in different districts. The efficiency of the training was vouched for by the fact that after the German raid on Scarborough, when the collecting of crowds in the streets resulted in so lamentably large a death-roll, the Mayor of Gateshead invited the local branch of the Women's Volunteer Reserve to take charge of the civilian population in the event of a raid on his town.

Not the least important part of the Reserve work was its social side, which it is hoped to carry on in times of peace by the formation of a big guild for women workers, which should do much to break down the jealousy and class distinctions now existent in the ranks of girl wage-earners.

The war had not lasted many weeks, however, before it was seen that there were scores of directions in which women's work could be utilized to the advantage of soldiers in training as well as

for the benefit of the men at the Front. At an early date the Young Men's Christian Association took hold of the problem of evening recreation in camps, but it was speedily found that it was not sufficient merely to erect a tent, or to provide services, newspapers, and refreshments and accommodation for writing letters for these men who came together in thousands.

These tents, to the number of 600 or more, grew, in the natural order of things, into the dimensions and usefulness of clubs: and clubs meant social intercourse and games. An appeal had therefore to be issued to English women to come to the rescue with at least 100,000 books and numberless sets of dominoes, bagatelle boards, gramophones, draughts, chess, and puzzles.

Luckily this need was quickly met by donors in all parts of the kingdom and the colonies. In fact, the scope of requirements was speedily widened as unframed pictures, chairs, tables, writing-desks, and pianos also made their appearance: and very quickly the Y.M.C.A. tents became the recognized centres of social work and service. Concerts were also frequently provided by singers who resided in the district.

This opening no doubt was more readily welcomed because by this time there had come a halt in the labours of thousands of work parties held in connection with churches, municipal bodies, and war institutions and associations. At first these parties, it is true, found that the need for sewn and knitted garments was overwhelming, but in an incredibly short space of time the demands

of the Red Cross centres, hospitals and other quarters were overtaken. Hundreds of thousands of blankets were also collected in an emergency and forwarded to the trenches.

In this crisis an Emergency Voluntary Aid Committee was formed at the Empress Club. This body put themselves into touch with hospitals, hospital ships, nursing centres, and other kindred agencies, and soon were able not only to collate a guide to the requirements of the moment, but to advise work parties to the best advantage. It also secured special facilities for sending parcels of goods to the places where they were most needed.

Meanwhile, however, the pinch of war was making itself felt in another direction. In the autumn of 1914 it was noticed that an unexpected amount of unemployment was to be found amongst women engaged in dressmaking and trimming, and other similar trades. This did not decrease, but grew in volume until it attracted the notice of Lady Jane Gathorne-Hardy and Lord Plunket, who courageously started various United Work-rooms in London. These rooms had two objects :

1. To employ women who, through no fault of their own, were rendered liable to destitution on account of the war.
2. To employ those women on such work as would compete with existing industries as little as possible.

The work undertaken at these rooms included bead chains woven in regimental colours ; sam-

plers, specially designed to commemorate the war ; bags, cushions, muff-chains, neckwear, earrings, and embroidered children's frocks. Orders were also executed for soldiers' shirts, and every kind of fine and plain needlework.

No subscriptions were appealed for, but the committee made every effort to secure customers, and their efforts were so successful that they were able to devote a considerable sum, under the heading of profits, to various approved war charities.

More direct work, thanks to Lady Crewe, was also undertaken for the benefit of the woman artist, who quickly found herself enrolled in the ranks of war victims. Workrooms were established at 34, Park Street, W., in a house lent by Mrs. James de Rothschild, and there, every day, from ten to half-past four, with a brief interval for lunch, were employed a number of women artists making ornaments of various kinds. The chief distinction of their work was the application of the diamanté form of decoration to such things as coiffure ornaments, shoe-buckles, blotters, vanity bags, and letter cases.

Hitherto diamanté work had been furnished to England almost exclusively by workers in France, and it was particularly to Paris that women had to turn when they sought some of its most delightful examples. But Lady Crewe was very anxious that the form of work done in those workrooms should not enter into competition with any existing trade in England, and so diamanté was adopted as the staple feature with a particular view to

wedding and birthday gifts and Christmas and Easter presents. And the Queen and Princess Mary soon interested themselves in the project, which was quickly organized into profit and success.

Another interesting change in our social life was observed about this time. The patriotic idea gained currency that it was not expedient to employ a large number of able-bodied young men in domestic service when their King and Country needed them; and many society women took the lead in advising their grooms, gardeners, and footmen to enlist, and in employing women in their places. At the same time the English waitress established herself in quarters that three months previous would have none of her. Coincidentally with the internment of German and Austrian aliens an agitation sprang up against the employment of any foreign waiters, and soon trim, well-clad English waitresses were to be seen in clubs and large residential hotels in London and many establishments up and down the country that had hitherto scorned this type of feminine aid.

Nevertheless, the war did not affect one phase of the domestic servant question that for many years had defied solution. Cook-generals became no more plentiful, although many influential families cut down their staff of domestic servants to the lowest point of efficiency. Experience showed that the discharged maids took the places of the discharged aliens; and the old balance between the supply and demand of domestic help was never seriously affected after the first

fortnight of the war, and good servants remained as rare and as difficult to secure as before the war.

It should be noted, however, that women took hold of some most thorny problems in the early months of the war. For instance, some of the most distinguished women in the kingdom early in November, 1914, issued a manifesto "to women of the Empire" in which they did some uncommonly plain speaking about the morals of the race.

"Will the women of England unite in a great movement towards a finer and higher ideal of national duty?" they asked. "This is the moment to begin. We are called upon to help our soldiers to fight the enemies of demoralization and drink at home; we are called upon to crush these enemies in our own lives and homes; and we are called upon so to live as to bequeath a heritage of health and happiness to the children we shall eventually give to the nation."

A mass meeting of women in support of this point of view was held in the London Guildhall under the presidency of Lady Jellicoe; and the Young Women's Christian Association inaugurated a Girl's Welfare movement to prevent dangers to girls from the presence of crowded military camps. Amongst others, it had the approval of Lady Smith-Dorrien, who gave to a large meeting of women the following message from her distinguished husband: "Tell the women and girls that they can serve their country by leading quiet lives, thus setting an example of self-restraint and uprightness at home, which, equally with the bravery of their dear ones in the war, is necessary



to bring this country through this great national crisis with credit to those who have the good fortune to live under the Union Jack." On this occasion a Central Committee was formed with the object of uniting all those women who were working in some phase or another for the welfare of young girls, and of taking action in conjunction with the military and municipal authorities to prevent girls hanging around the camps or tempting the soldiers away from the obvious paths of duty and self-discipline.

Much good work was done in this direction, and for a time these efforts were supplemented by a number of volunteer women constables who adopted a special uniform in London and several large provincial cities, and did a certain amount of patrol work that was permitted, but not recognized officially, by the authorities.

Surveying the whole situation of women's activities at this juncture, it can be seen that women have quietly and resolutely taken their share of the national responsibilities. There is no fuss, no flurry, no friction. Women have volunteered, organized and laboured, and nothing that is calculated to help British arms and success has suffered for lack of a woman's brain or hand.

## CHAPTER III

### THE FEMINIST IN WAR TIME

TO give anything like an adequate representation of the work undertaken by the various Women's Suffrage Organizations of Great Britain during the progress of the war would probably fill three or four volumes, and would, necessarily, be almost of an encyclopædic nature. The activities of women suffragists in every direction, for their country's benefit, have been a revelation and, perhaps, an object lesson to many who have hitherto ventured to doubt the single-heartedness and patriotic spirit of those members of the feminine community who, for the last half-century, have been working in various ways for political enfranchisement.

✠ Immediately war was declared there was a call throughout the kingdom, and every suffrage association gathered its members together. The militants immediately called a truce; the non-militant societies suspended much of their active suffrage work. All decided to put the needs of their country in its hour of peril before all other considerations, and while still keeping the suffrage flag flying, to devote their time and energies and money to the alleviation of distress and to the

support of the Government, wherever and whenever possible.

"Let us show ourselves worthy of citizenship, whether our claim to it be recognized or not," said Mrs. Fawcett, President of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies. There were 500 societies in that Union. All responded magnificently to the call made upon them, and within a few days of the declaration of the war adapted themselves to the new conditions.

The National Union determined not to add to the volume of unemployment by dismissing a single member of its staff, either at Head-quarters or among the organizers. It paid the salaries of nearly 150 workers all over the country who were lent to the local relief committees and other bodies responsible for carrying out the special schemes devised for meeting the conditions caused by the war.

The relief work of the National Union spread in many directions, but each direction pointed to one aim—the support of life, moral and physical. The care of the child was given special importance, and, in conjunction with the Women's Co-operation Guild, an active part has been taken in organizing Maternity centres throughout the country. "Babies' Welcomes" and day nurseries were opened, and mothers were given instruction at these centres in the feeding and nursing of the children.

Perhaps the most interesting part of the work of this Union was the establishment of the Active Service League which was initiated by Mrs.

Harley, a sister of Viscount French. This organization mobilized 53,000 subscribers within a few days, and the League opened offices at 50, Parliament Street. Here some two thousand women volunteers were registered, classified, and passed on to organizations needing their services, while from 20 to 100 women in distress—refugees, unemployed, etc.—were helped daily.

Here, too, was a workroom where sewing was done, an emergency measure for the absolutely destitute whom the Union could not turn from its doors to starve in the streets. The women were employed there until permanent work could be found for them, and they visited the Labour Exchange in search of it daily, the Union in the meantime doing its best to help in the search, as also to collect funds for the women's wages and orders for their work.

Some of the garments made in the workrooms are both artistic and ingenious. That the work is also practical was recently proved by a rather amusing experience. A gentleman appeared in the shop one morning, and challenged the suffragists to show what they could do in the way of making shirts for which he needed a special method of tucking, and particular buttonholes. Nowhere had he been able to get this done to his satisfaction in London. Could the suffrage shop step into the breach? The shop accepted the challenge, and so satisfactory was the result that an order was immediately given.

A splendid piece of work of the Active Service Leaguers was the organization of a scheme to

economize the national food supply. Suffragists who had been salving the fruit crops and making jam for the winter, received every help and encouragement from their local County Council, and practical demonstrations in bottling and preserving were given and trained cookery instructresses supplied. In some instances, these efforts may result in the birth of a new local industry in the district.

The relief of professional women in distress has been one of the latest developments of the National Union, the services of trained women being supplied free to various philanthropic and national institutions. The Professional Women's Patriotic Service Fund, initiated by the Union, undertook to pay these salaries, thus proving an excellent means of helping in a practical way educated and competent women workers, and of serving the needs of the country in a variety of directions.

In the early days of the war it was recognized that the Red Cross Societies of the Allies would be likely to need all the trained help they could obtain, and the Scottish Federation of the N.U.W.S.S. came forward with offers of assistance. A committee was formed, with Dr. Elsie Inglis (the well-known Edinburgh doctor) at its head, and three hospitals were equipped and staffed for the French, Belgian, and Serbian Red Cross Societies. Gifts and funds came in rapidly, as well as doctors, nurses, orderlies, X-ray experts, secretaries, clerks, cooks, and chauffeurs, so that it was possible to staff the hospitals, from doctor to cook, with women

only. In the Serbian Unit, however, there were two men motor-drivers.

The French hospital is carrying on its work in the beautiful old Abbaye of Royaumont. Ten years ago the French Government ejected the nuns, and since then the place had been deserted, so that when the Scottish hospital staff arrived they found an apparently impossible task before them. But all had come prepared for difficulties and prepared to overcome them, so they set to work to clean down walls and floors.

One girl orderly who was an excellent carpenter, made tables, and in a surprisingly short time the hospital was ready to be inspected by the French Military Hospital Authorities, who gave it their cordial approval. Four wards have been fitted up, and an enormous amount of work has been done for the aid of wounded soldiers. The Girton and Newnham unit at Troyes, which is working under the French Military Authorities, was ordered to Salonica, where it formed part of a thousand-bed French hospital working with the French Expeditionary Force. The Serbian Unit was originally installed at Kragienwatz, twenty-five miles from Belgrade. The total cost of equipping this hospital amounted to £3000, and the first consignment of wounded consisted of 250 men.

Part of the great work of the Women's Freedom League, of which Mrs. Despard is president, was helping the wounded at home. The Women's Suffrage National Service Corps was organized by this League, and one of its first efforts was to provide a hospital for the women and children who

would in ordinary times have been taken into the London hospitals. Mrs. Harvey lent her beautiful house "Brackenhill," at Bromley, for this purpose, and its spacious rooms were soon converted into sick wards. "Brackenhill" accommodates forty patients, and there are surgical, maternity, and children's wards. The first baby born in the hospital was a Belgian. Some very distressing cases were received, especially in the children's ward, and it has been recognized that Mrs. Harvey's work was one of the finest pieces of practical patriotism which has been carried out during the progress of the war.

Mrs. Despard's idea to start a cost price restaurant for the very poor at Currie Street, Nine Elms, was an excellent one, and met with instant success. It is locally known as "The Suffragettes' Cook House," and from 170 to 200 women, children, and old people daily sit down to a substantial meal which costs from a halfpenny to twopence. Mrs. Tippet, the novelist, presides over this excellent and much-needed institution, and has organized a children's play club in connection with it for children of from four to ten years of age. A children's "Guest House" was also opened next door to the restaurant, and children whose mothers are ill and unable to look after them are here entertained, a small charge being made in cases where the parents are able to pay.

The Women's Suffrage National Service Corps, under the auspices of the Women's Freedom League, opened a workroom at Kensington for factory hands and needlewomen out of work,

where all kinds of garments were made. Their training centre in South Hackney for the manufacture of soft toys proved a big success. It provided unskilled women with a trade which may later be the nucleus of a home industry hitherto widely practised in Germany. A Bureau of Employment has been opened in connection with this society for getting employment for women in Government departments, and for obtaining other appointments for working women, and for those suited for business and professional careers.

An interesting and useful development, which owes its origin to Miss Nina Boyle of the Women's Freedom League, was the women's police force, now known as the Women's Police Volunteers, which looks after the interests of women and children in big crowded places, stations, and police courts. Its work is distinct from the Police Patrols organized by the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, and concentrates on permanent rather than emergency work.

The babies of East London in the early days of the war were crying for milk. The East London Federation of Suffragettes heard the cry and supplied their need in an incredibly short space of time. Within a week of the commencement of the war, Miss Sylvia Pankhurst started in Bow a daily free distribution of milk to the babies of necessitous mothers. Milk depôts were also opened simultancously at Bromley and Canning Town. To provide milk only for the nursing and expectant mothers and the babies was not enough while entire families were in urgent need of daily



food, so "cost price" restaurants were opened in Bow, Poplar, and Bromley, where two-course meals might be bought at 1d. for children and 2d. for adults, while free meals, especially in the case of nursing and expectant mothers, might be given when necessary.

Clothing stalls have been opened at the various centres; new and second-hand clothes may be bought at low prices, and, in urgent cases, clothes are given away. The Co-operative Boot Factory is another industry started by the East London Federation of Suffragettes. Trade Union rates of wages are paid and the profits go to the workers. From the toy factory, rag and china-headed dolls of original and artistic design are supplied, while East End girls are engaged in making dolls' furniture, wooden houses, carts and barrows, and flat wooden toys. In the garment-making factory women are employed at 5d. an hour to make clothes for those who are destitute.

The war suddenly deprived many thousands of women in the East End of London of their occupation in all forms of garment-making, and as shoemakers, brush-makers, box-makers, flower-makers, and also in sweet and food preserving factories and in other branches of industry. What these women wanted was work, not charity, and the fine resources and inventive abilities of the East London Federation of Suffragettes have gone far to solve that tragic problem of distress.

The United Suffragists (men and women), whose supporters include Mrs. Hertha Ayrton, Sir Harry Johnston, Lady Muir Mackenzie, and

Major-General Sir Alfred Turner, inaugurated, through Miss Evelyn Sharp, Editor of "Votes for Women," and Mrs. Ayrton Gould, Honorary Secretary of the Society, a much-needed club for working women in Southwark. There the mothers and wives of the men at the Front went for help, advice, recreation, and comfort.

One poor soul—a typical case—came in a few hours after her husband had departed for France. "She was 'feelin' so lonesome,'" said the secretary, "so she came round to tell us all about it." Ten minutes later, with a cup of hot tea in her hand, sitting in one of the new cosy arm-chairs, she "warmed up" and confessed that she began to feel a different woman. Before the club started, she would probably have had to go to the public-house for the sympathy she wanted.

Miss Evelyn Sharp reports that one of the women expressed herself in the warmest terms of approval: "What I like about it," said she, "is that it's just like a West End gentleman's club!"

"Then," says Miss Sharp, "I knew we were all right. I do not know whether West End gentlemen's clubs really have white-painted doors and beautiful wall-paper with bunches of pink roses all over it, and blue plush curtains, and padded basket chairs, and upholstered inglenooks—and a baby's bottle (this, I admit, was an incident nobody ever explained, but it made us feel all at home), and brand new gas-cooking stoves, and purple and white and orange flags, and copies of 'Votes for Women'—but *our* club is like that, and the lady who drew the comparison gave us exactly

the assurance we needed—that we did not look like a charitable venture, tempered with instruction.”

One poor mother was brought to the club by a friend, to be cheered up because her husband had just enlisted in Ireland. “I didn’t mind so much at first,” said she, “but when all his clothes came home to me to-day—it fairly got me! There they all were, looking so like him—his coat and his weskit, and his blue tie—it made me cry, it did. It’s worse than a death, that’s what I say, coz you never know, in this war, what’s happenin’ to ’em.”

From East to West is not a far cry when love and service bind women together. The New Constitutional Society for Women’s Suffrage discovered that much could be done at Knightsbridge for the alleviation of distress among working women, and they concentrated their energies upon finding paid employment for skilled dress-makers thrown out of work by the war, realizing that this class of women worker would be among the most severely hit by the changed economic conditions. They specialized in Red Cross dresses, aprons, clothing for soldiers, refugees, and work which would otherwise have been done by customers and their friends to the detriment of the paid worker. The girls in the beautiful airy work-room opened by the Society quickly became expert at the new trade, and also learnt machine-knitting, so that they are enabled to take large orders for belts, socks, mufflers, mittens, and helmets. The New Constitutional Society has also opened a

club for soldiers' and sailors' wives at Camberwell and girls' clubs at Dover and Ashford.

The need for hostels for educated women thrown out of employment by the war, was early recognized by the Conservative and Unionist Women's Franchise Association, the President of which is the Countess of Selborne, and the Chairman Winifred, Countess of Arran. The members rose splendidly to the call made upon them, and a house in South Kensington was opened for the benefit of ladies who were in distress. Many governesses have been stranded owing to the war, and, perhaps, still more difficult has been the position of the "companion" who, in most cases, is of gentle birth and used to refined surroundings. To these the hostel has been of real assistance. The guests are admitted temporarily and, while there, are helped to find work or make other plans.

The Conservative and Unionist Franchise Association has also been busy in various other directions, opening depôts for giving out needlework, sending an ambulance to the Front, and rendering valuable help to the War Refugees Committees.

The International Women Suffrage Alliance has taken a world-wide view of the needs of humanity, and refugees from all the countries engaged in the war, who have come to their hospitable doors in Adam Street, Strand, have received practical help. French, German, Austrian, Russian, and Hungarian women have alike benefited from the kind ministrations of this admirable body of workers. Bohemians have been in a particularly difficult position. The condition of

Bohemia has prevented their return to their own country, while here they are classed as alien enemies. One lady, a Bohemian, who had come over to study the woman's movement before the war, suddenly found herself penniless as the supplies from home had ceased. Hospitality was at once found for her, first in Hampstead, then in Cumberland, whence she wrote : " It is a miracle—all that happens to me in England ! "

Actresses have always been known to be generous to their co-workers in trouble, and the Actresses' Franchise League lost no time in arranging concerts and entertainments in order to give work to actors, actresses, concert artistes, and variety artistes who had been thrown out of employment. Twice a week the League has been giving entertainments in the Church Army Hut in Hyde Park, and has collaborated with Mr. Barnard of " The Era " War Distress Fund. It organized its offices and the work of its committee so that its relief work should not overlap, and an enormous amount of work has been done in giving employment, providing hospitality, and supplying funds for food, medical aid, and clothing. The latest indication of the activity of this Society is the granting of the use of its offices to the British Women's Hospital Fund for the purpose of raising £50,000 to build the Star and Garter House for totally disabled soldiers and sailors.

The Women's Emergency Corps is perhaps the largest of all the Women's Organizations for the relief of war distress. It was started within two days of the declaration of war by some members

of the Actresses' Franchise League, and was at first worked from the offices of this Society. In one week, however, it became too big for the rooms of the A.F.L. and migrated to the Little Theatre lent by Miss Gertrude Kingston. Here, however, it soon outgrew its accommodation and has now, through the generosity of the Duchess of Marlborough, found permanent head-quarters in Baker Street.

The work, the membership, and the ramifications of the Women's Emergency Corps are so extensive that it cannot, in fact, be identified with Suffragist organization. Some of its most ardent workers are non-Suffragists, and it works in association with other great bodies, such as the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families' Association, the National Union of Women Workers, the Charity Organization Society, the Young Women's Christian Association War Clubs, the Children's Care Committees, and the Women's League of Service and Schools for Mothers.

The Kitchen Department, aided by supplies from the National Food Fund, distributed in four months 28,378 meals, and 1065 lbs. of plum puddings were made before Christmas. In co-operation with the National Guild of Housecraft, unemployed girls have been given training in domestic work; thousands of handy women have been sent as helpers to various benevolent agencies, and paid employment has been found for women in almost every professional trade and industry.

The Women's Emergency Corps Toy-Making Industry soon outgrew the accommodation at

head-quarters, and Lord Portman came to their help, lending them a disused chapel on his estate where the girls are now at work. Twenty branches of this big undertaking are established in different parts of the country, and some of the largest London firms, besides two in Natal and Cape Town, have given important orders for toys.

The interpreting department of the W.E.C. was the first organized body to assist the refugees from Belgium. Hundreds of interpreters were enrolled; they met the continental trains at all the stations, and ships at the various docks; they provided carefully compiled lists of hotels, boarding houses, and lodgings of all kinds, and investigated and arranged accommodation. In those early days before the Belgian Relief centre in Kingsway was opened, many hundreds of refugees would have fared very badly without the help of this able band.

The Women's Emergency Corps were the first to start teaching elementary French and German to the soldiers in training, and held classes in nearly fifty military centres. Their hospitality department has also done colossal work for Belgian and French refugees in supplying both homes and clothing to those who were homeless and destitute. Some hundreds of women motor-cyclists and motorists who run their own cars and are capable of doing running repairs, have registered in the Motor Department. These cars rendered invaluable service in the early days of the war, meeting trains of refugees, and they have also been lent

to the War Refugee Committee, private hospitals for officers, and various societies.

There are branches of the Women's Emergency Corps all over Great Britain; Edinburgh and Glasgow have done yeoman service in every direction, and each branch throughout the country is managed independently by its own committee and raises its own funds.

Space prevents a recital in this chapter of the manifold activities of all women's societies, but among many others which are engaged in benevolent work of various kinds, may be mentioned the National Political League, which has initiated a big agricultural movement for women, the Women Writer's Suffrage League, the Forward Cymric Union, the National Industrial and Professional Women's Suffrage Society, the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, the Liberal Women's Suffrage Union, the Church League for Women's Suffrage, the Free Church League, the Dublin Suffragists' Emergency Council, and the Jewish League for Woman Suffrage.



## CHAPTER IV

### AMONGST THE WOUNDED

**B**EFORE the first fortnight of August, 1914, was over there appeared in the morning papers a modest little paragraph announcing that the first Army Nursing Unit had left for the Front. Ten surgeons, ten dressers, and twenty nurses garbed in grey with that dash of red upon their shoulder capes, formed the detachment which, under Sir Alfred Keogh, left London for Belgium "for general service with the Allied troops."

Since then the Red Cross Society has been sending detachments to the Front, grappling with all the horrors that spring upon an army in modern warfare.

Not one of the nurses of the Red Cross Society and St. John Ambulance Corps, or a member of any War-Nursing Community, asked in such a time of the nation's need for a tribute of gratitude from anyone—least of all from the wounded warrior himself! Lady Norman, writing from an Auxiliary Base Hospital under the British Red Cross in Northern France, put it in this way: "The one thing we cannot stand is their gratitude. Fancy being grateful for what is, after all, their absolute right—to be looked after when they fall! And they never complain, they are never anything

but good and patient and thankful. I do not know how a man can be good and patient and thankful with only one leg for the rest of his life and all that this crippled condition means. Yet they are, and one learns to know from them what bravery is."

"What we do is nothing," said a Red Cross worker the other day, and the ring in her voice was almost fierce. "You begin to know just a little of what war means when you see those heroes brought in and laid on the grey receiving blanket, their clothes all torn and muddy and covered with smears and splashes of blood; when you hear them call to each other in semi-delirium, as if they were still in the trenches; when you see how they smile and thank you while they are twisted by cruel pain. Is not this the very least we can do for these wonderful men who are doing so much more than laying down their lives for us? Why, the horrors of war are unspeakable, and those brave fellows romp through it all as if it were a picnic!"

The speaker was a young girl, and her outlook on life had assumed a new and marvellous focus. For one of the first lessons the Red Cross worker learns is that Courage and Gaiety have a way of travelling hand in hand, and this lesson well learnt does much to relieve the inevitable tension of hospital work.

Take, for example, the description written by Miss Cicely Hamilton, the authoress. Nothing could be more amusing reading than her account of her experiences in the making of a Red Cross

Hospital. With entire good humour she tells first of countless skirmishes with red-tape officialdom on both sides of the Channel. Then she racily narrates how one numbers, packs, and registers in bales and cases the entire hospital equipment and resignedly says good-bye to it while it certainly makes the "Grand Tour," finally arriving when and how it feels inclined, and not in the least when you arranged or expected it! The bales are then checked off and search parties sent out after the "missing," for items such as bedsteads, drugs, and instruments will be found still to be enjoying the pleasures of the "Grand Tour."

Miss Hamilton goes on to tell how the hospital staff finds the plumbing incomplete, and how many other inconveniences, not usually thought trifling, crop up to hinder the great work. And while the ordinary householder would be holding up hands of horror, these brave women work away, with smiles and joking comments, establishing a thoroughly efficient hospital in the midst of what seemed to the mere onlooker only hopeless chaos!

There are some who hold that only fully trained professional nurses should be allowed to assist in the care of the wounded, and we gladly pay our tribute to women like Dr. Mary Garrett Anderson, Dr. Flora Murray, Dr. Elsie Inglis, and many other splendid women surgeons and doctors, and fully qualified and certificated nurses. At the same time, we must recognize that the Red Cross Societies of the Allied Nations have found it possible to make use of personal service from girls

and women of the leisured classes who have worked sufficiently to form an invaluable National Nursing Service.

“What a marvellous sisterhood this Red Cross makes!” exclaimed a Japanese nurse, through her interpreter, on her arrival at Liverpool with the Japanese Red Cross Unit; and this remark has been frequently echoed during the later phases of the war.

The President of the British Red Cross Society, as everyone knows, is Queen Alexandra, and magnificent devotion is being shown not only by these Red Cross nurses, but by Her Majesty's Imperial Service Sisters and Naval Nurses. For in days of peace, as ardently as now, the Queen-Mother has given to the nursing efforts of England's women an earnest, sincere, and whole-hearted interest. Nothing that Her Majesty could do to further the growth of this public service has been left undone.

When the new King George V Red Cross Hospital was fitting up a mortuary chapel, Queen Alexandra sent a brass cross and two beautiful vases for the altar, with a few tender words as an accompanying message. It is these little watchful kindnesses which so endear the Queen to the hearts of the people. She never needs to be told what is wanted.

“How did she know?” is not an uncommon exclamation where Queen Alexandra is concerned. Committees and private individuals are alike astonished. “A heart at leisure from itself” gives true intuition.

Millicent, Duchess of Sutherland, has rendered splendid service to the nation during the war. In August, 1914, the "Millicent Sutherland Ambulance" began its work at Namur in Belgium. It consisted of only eight trained nurses and one surgeon, Mr. Oswald Morgan, of Guy's Hospital, who has remained as head of the Unit ever since.

During six weeks of German occupation one hundred wounded French and Belgian soldiers were tended in the Convent of Notre Dame. In time the wounded were removed to Germany, and the Ambulance was sent by the German Director of Medical Services to Maubeuge, and after many vicissitudes passed safely to England through Holland at the end of September, 1914.

At the end of October the Duchess went to Dunkirk with some Ambulance cars. She arrived at the height of the Yser fighting, when thousands of wounded French and Belgians were pouring through the town. The hospitals were filled to overflowing, and the Duchess was asked to start an auxiliary hospital in a building at Malo-les-Bains, close to the sea. This she consented to do, and, after many difficulties and owing entirely to the generosity of British and American friends, funds were secured to run a hospital of 100 beds which was added to the convoy of seven Ambulance cars, already at work day and night.

The whole Unit retained its original name of the "Millicent Sutherland Ambulance," and the hospital continued its work at Malo until the third bombardment of Dunkirk in the spring of 1915, when it was considered wise to move all

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### AMONGST THE WOUNDED

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the wounded to Bourbourg, some twelve miles outside Dunkirk.

At Bourbourg the hospital became a Tent Unit, and was well known as the "Camp in the Oat Field." It excited a great deal of interest, as the wounded were largely treated in the open air and did so remarkably well.

During a whole year leading members of the British Army Medical Service have visited the hospital, and British physicians have occasionally come from the Front in consultation. All have expressed great approval of its organization and efficiency.

The Duchess herself has acted as Directress in relation to all matters of supplies and the pecuniary support of the hospital, which has been recognized by the British Red Cross since last April.

The Duchess of Westminster, another hard-working Duchess, started a hospital at Le Touquet in October, 1914, where it has been running ever since in the Casino. Originally equipped for 250 men and 10 officers in May, 1915, the officers' accommodation was increased to forty beds, and in August, by request of the Army Medical Authorities, it was converted entirely into an officers' hospital. Up to the time of the conversion 3800 men and 236 officers passed through, and since then 935 officers have been tended there. This hospital is thought to be one of the best in France, and the Duchess has superintended it entirely herself.

Lady Wimborne's house in Arlington Street was made the first Head-quarters of the Allies'

Field Ambulance Corps. The new Viceroy of Ireland and his beautiful young wife are very much interested in ambulance work. Before they left to take up their duties in Ireland, fleets of these wagons of mercy, each with its Red Cross sign on the grey canvas cover, could be seen daily in the courtyard before their house.

The leaders of the nursing service do not forget the kitchen in these days of sound, practical common sense. The new "flying kitchen" goes on to the field of battle with each ambulance convoy. Hot beef-tea, soup, coffee, cocoa, and milk are given to the wounded and exhausted men, and the huge water tank and boiler that form part of each "kitchen" are invaluable if new dressings are needed on the way to the clearing hospital. These kitchens are of necessity costly things. The car must be prepared to face never-ceasing work and very hard wear, and consequently the cost of each works out at close upon £600. Lady Wantage presented one such car to the Red Cross Society, and the Duchess of Devonshire gave another. The women of various countries clubbed together to meet the expense of providing others, Hampshire and Shropshire being among the first to lend help in this very practical direction.

It was Lady Limerick who had the brilliant idea of planning a Free Refreshment Buffet for travelling soldiers and sailors at London Bridge Station, and helped to start the Buffet with the funds raised on Shamrock Day. Here the travelling soldier or sailor can get a free meal at any

hour between 8 a.m. and 10 p.m.—hot tea, coffee, or cocoa, sandwiches, cake, and cigarettes, and for those who are going to the Front letter paper and pencils are provided. An average of 1200 men or more are thus fed per day. The authorities are immensely pleased with this scheme, as the men are kept away from the public-house, and the men also greatly appreciate the interest shown in them by the thirty or forty lady workers.

These canteens are now being established at most of our big railway stations, and are doing invaluable work.



## CHAPTER V

### HEROINES OF THE WAR ZONE

**T**HOUGH women play so large a part in every war, and one instinctively thinks of them as nurses for the wounded, one does not associate them with the actual horrible work of fire and slaughter. Yet there is no more interesting phase of the women's part in this war than that which relates to their activity in the actual firing line. The world, which has hitherto regarded battle as essentially a man's business, has lately learnt with something of a shock that in Belgium women have come to look upon it with a supreme indifference. Familiarity has bred such stoicism in the face of danger that women have been known to milk their few remaining cows within range of constantly-dropping shells, and to trudge miles along dangerous roads, bearing baskets of provisions for the husbands, sons or brothers they expected to find in every trench they passed.

One British war correspondent, indeed, told how here and there he had seen family parties sitting on newly turned earth at the bottom of the trenches—father, mother and children, some mites in arms, talking earnestly to each other and sharing the scantiest of meals. Even during the

raging battle of Mons women and girls found their way fearlessly into the trenches with food and fruit for the fighting men. One girl, hardly more than seventeen, faced the terrific noise of conflict and the peril of shell and bullet quite undismayed.

There is a pathetic story of an old woman, seventy years of age, who arriving at Antwerp on the eve of its fall, approached one of the outposts, and told how she had come on foot from Liège to see her son. And she found him, poor devoted soul—a son who had acted as orderly to General Leman, the gallant defender of Liège, and, when he thought his master was dead, had posted off to Antwerp to strike another blow at the enemy.

In Russia, many of the peasant women, used in times of peace to the hardest physical labour in the fields, have an enduring strength which is less common among Western races, and quite large numbers of them have not only helped to dig trenches, but have, under various disguises and pretexts, joined the fighting forces. A Petrograd writer assures us that the most successful conspirators were the masculine-looking peasant women of the northern provinces. Surely the veteran of them all must be Nadezda Ornatsky, a woman of Archangel, who posed as a man during a large part of the Russo-Japanese war of ten years ago, and so had little difficulty in reassuming the part of a private in August, 1914. Only after the battle of Lubin-Krasnik was her sex discovered.

Another Russian named Linba Uglicki was

actually present at four different East Prussian or Polish engagements, and was slightly wounded. It is said she feared nothing but the ordeal of crossing bayonets with the foe. Pride of family is a strong emotion among the Russian peasantry, and it drove another woman to take up arms when her husband shirked his military summons. She impersonated the coward, to preserve the family reputation from tarnish, and at Gumbinnen the action cost her her life.

Perhaps the most thrilling story of this nature relates to the adventures of Lyubov Ouglitski, called the "Augustovo Amazon," a twenty-one-year-old girl from Smolensk. Lyubov—whose name means "love"—has taken part in four big battles, in her masculine disguise, and had not sickness intervened she would no doubt be still in the firing-line.

Her rôle of a man is made more astonishing by the fact that she is described as "pretty, with expressive, gazelle eyes, but somewhat too strongly built." When war was declared she went boldly to Smolensk, where she impersonated her reservist brother, who had died a few days previously. She was enrolled in the 7th Army Corps, and finally found herself in Rennenkampf's army. When Rennenkampf first inspected his men he spoke among others to Lyubov, asked the name of her village, and said, "Well, you're a fine lad!"

This "Augustovo Amazon's" first fight was Gumbinnen, when the Germans were driven back. After General Rennenkampf evacuated East Prussia he fought a rearguard action at Kalvarija.

Mlle. Ouglitski's battalion here lost half its men in killed and wounded. The girl warrior took part in a fierce fight for a village, which ended in the village being destroyed. She says she was not terrified as long as the Germans were on the offensive. But when her shattered battalion was ordered to charge with the bayonet a fearful dread seized her.

"I was terribly afraid of having to kill a man. To shoot I did not mind," she said. "I may have shot several men, but the idea of using my bayonet overwhelmed and horrified me. I realized that if I now killed a man in this way I should know it, and I should remember it to my last day. I prayed that I myself might be shot."

Mlle. Ouglitski fought at Augustovo in September, 1914, also shortly afterwards in a desperate struggle on the Niemen. After the last fight she thought of deserting, but feared she would be captured and shot. She kept the secret of her sex by pretending to be particularly rough and callous.

"At times my heart bled with compassion which I could not express," she said. Finally her military career was ended by a slight wound from a shell splinter.

"There are at least a score of women fighting on our side," declared this undaunted soldier, and the many other instances of which one has heard certainly seem to bear out her statement. A woman who passed as Private Norman Nesmetooff was killed outside Suvalki. On the day before her death she made a forced march with her battalion of 42 versts (about twenty-six miles).

It is given to few women to don male attire and fight side by side with their brothers, but since war began many have shown in more legitimate fields a quiet heroism, a staunch cleaving to duty, for which no praise is too high. What of the two Belgian girls who were on duty at the telephone switch-board when Louvain's day of terror began? Similar cases have been related in peace as well as in conflict, but no records of war heroism can rank above this tale of duty well done.

Nearer and nearer, it is recorded, came the thunder of the German guns. Shells began to burst on the outskirts of the town, then in the very streets. Ominous flames crackled, leaping around the houses. Shrapnel bullets were raining on all sides of the telephone exchange, yet still the two operators stayed unflinchingly at their posts. Whatever peril might threaten from shell or flames, they never thought of seeking safety in flight, for well they knew that along the lines which they were serving were passing the orders of the Belgian staff directing the safe retreat of the Belgian forces. It was only when they could do no more good, when the wires had been cut or carried away by shells, and their building threatened to collapse, that Valerie di Martinelli and Léonie Van Lindt crept out of the exchange.

Antwerp yielded an equally striking example of the war heroine in two sisters who had only had a week's training as nurses, but must have been exceptionally well endowed by nature with iron nerves. They were English, and it often

happened in the hospital in which they served that there was no time to give anæsthetics, and that all that could be done was to hold the patients' hands under the most excruciating operations. The men in their agony would crush their fingers harder and harder, but they never uttered a sound.

Other British women, in breeches and great boots, went out under heavy fire near Nieuport, we are told, with the equanimity that one would associate with an afternoon drive in the park. They moved about among the great holes which the shells were tearing in the ground, seeking and caring for the wounded with as much ease as if taking tea in their own drawing-rooms. Lady Dorothie Feilding, the daughter of the Earl of Denbigh, worked at a small cottage hospital with her motor ambulance with shells flying round ; and Miss Jessie Borthwick, a niece of the late Lord Glenesk, nursed the wounded in Belgium under conditions that would make the stoutest heart quail, with the result that at Oudecappelle she herself was wounded. Later, at Dixmude, she tells us she came across some German soldiers who from cellars fired on her and her companions as they rushed about with stretchers !

“It was a full moon and the country was flat, with very few trees, so we had to lie flat and crawl along till we got to the trenches. The rifle fire was incessant, but we picked out all the men it was possible to move. That night, too, we had to burn piles of the German dead, for they had been throwing them into the river and spoiling the

water." Little cause for wonder after this that in an outburst of admiration the colonel of the Belgian Carbineers made Miss Borthwick a corporal, another corporal cutting off the stripes from his own coat for her adornment and honour.

Side by side with this is the story of Mrs. St. Clair Stobart, who went to Belgium with a complete hospital equipment and who, while endeavouring to get to Holland from Brussels, was imprisoned by the Germans and searched six times, narrowly escaping from being shot as a spy. In Antwerp Mrs. Stobart nursed the wounded amid a rain of shells, and when this fire endangered the lives of her ninety odd patients, Mrs. Stobart and her assistants, who included Miss S. Macnaughten, the novelist, carried their charges down into the cellars on their backs. This gallant band of twenty eventually rode out of Antwerp, through blazing streets, in London omnibuses laden with ammunition and driven by British soldiers.

Since then the merciful work has been carried on untiringly under more peaceful conditions near Cherbourg, where a beautiful château, lent by the owner, has been turned into a large hospital for French wounded. More recently Mrs. Stobart has organized relief expeditions to nurse the Serbian wounded.

Even the doubtful excitements of trench work and actual "under fire" experiences were denied to Miss Margaret C. Ryle, the young daughter of of an English bishop, who at the outbreak of war was in Russia, acting as coach to a girl preparing for Cambridge. Miss Ryle offered herself to the

authorities for hospital work, passed the necessary examination, of course in Russian, and, after a probationary period in a base hospital at Moscow, was transferred to the hospital train service running to and from the front and Moscow—most trying and exhausting work, consisting as it did of tending wounded straight from the battlefield, hampered by the restrictions of a long journey. A hospital train was being fitted up for Serbia, where the condition of the wounded was at that time truly appalling, and Miss Ryle accompanied it to Nish. A few days later she died from the effects of a mountain fall while going about her duties.

Serbian hospital work claimed another gallant victim last July, when Mrs. Percy Dearmer died of enteric contracted while nursing the wounded. She was a woman writer who had made a name for herself by her delightful children's books, plays, and novels. Three months later her younger son, of the R.N.V.A., gave his life also for his country.

Like Serbia, France has claimed an English victim. In the soldiers' cemetery at Le Mans lies a nineteen-year-old girl, Miss Bell, who was tending the wounded in the firing-line when a shell broke both her legs.

Chief among British nurses, however, stands the heroic figure of Miss Edith Cavell, who for many years was head of a nurses' training establishment in the Rue de la Culture at Brussels. When the capital of Belgium fell into German hands, Miss Cavell remained at her post, tending the enemy's wounded with the same care bestowed



upon those of the Allies. It was while she was actually engaged in bandaging a German's injuries that the Kaiser's soldiers rushed into the house and arrested her on a charge of sheltering English and Belgian soldiers and enabling them to get safely over the frontier. Despite the most persistent efforts made to save her by the American and Spanish ministers in Brussels, Miss Cavell languished ten weeks in prison, and was then tried by court-martial and executed in the middle of the night, within nine hours of her conviction.

Fortified by a life spent in ministering to others, the doomed nurse behaved throughout with a fine, quiet courage that never failed.

"I have seen death so often," she said to the clergyman who prayed with her during the last hours, "that it is not strange or fearful to me." And again, shortly before the end: "I realize that it is not enough to be patriotic. I must also bear my enemies no resentment for their treatment of me."

The news of her heroic death evoked wild outbursts of indignation not only in this country, but among neutrals, and even in the breasts of the Germans themselves. It is said that the firing party visibly trembled, and with one accord fired over her head, so that their officer had to do the deadly work himself by means of a revolver held to her ear. A memorial service, attended by Queen Alexandra in person, was held at St. Paul's Cathedral on October 29th, 1915, and the public subscribed lavishly to the Cavell Memorial Fund which was at once opened.

“What Jeanne d’Arc has been for centuries to France,” said one writer in the Press, “that will Edith Cavell become to the future generations of Britons.”

Another English nurse who deserves mention is Miss Violetta Thurston, who was ordered by the Germans to leave Brussels, where she had been doing excellent work. She was sent across Germany, having a tedious and uncomfortable journey, and when at Copenhagen she offered her services to the Russian Red Cross. Her offer was accepted, and she went to Lodz, where she was posted to a hospital in what was once a girls’ day school. Writing home, she said :

“It is crammed with wounded men, lying on stone floors, either on filthy mattresses or on straw, with no sheets and only one blanket each. There is no heating, as there is no coal, and it is frightfully cold. . . . For a week we have been heavily bombarded ; shells are bursting all round us, most of our windows are broken. The cannons stopped for a bit yesterday, but have now begun again with renewed force. We have had to move all our wounded from the top floor on account of the shells. A shell burst in front of us in the street to-day, but neither of us was hurt. It is extraordinary how one gets used to it.” Subsequently Miss Thurston went to Warsaw, making her journey in an ambulance wagon, with shells continually bursting near and bombs being dropped from aeroplanes.

Miss May Sinclair, the novelist, has published a glowing tribute to the work of the women

of the Motor Field Ambulance, in which she states :

“ When we were in Ghent I have known them work all day and half the night among the refugees at Termonde, on the ambulance trains as they arrived loaded from Antwerp, in our last appalling week ; in the dressing-stations at Alost, at Quartrecht, at Zele and Lokeren and Melle, wherever and whenever the wounded were brought in. They have gone out with the stretchers over the great open battlefield at Melle and brought in the wounded with their own hands ; for hours and days and nights at a time, under rifle-fire and shrapnel, they have done this. I saw them, after such a hard day's work, start off at twilight to bring in two wounded Germans whom the last ambulance had left there on that horrible field, and they brought them in—under the German fire.

“ At Furnes and Dixmude they have worked all night looking after their wounded, sometimes sleeping on straw in a room shared by the Belgian troops when there was no other shelter for them in the bombarded towns. Mrs. Knocker has driven a heavy ambulance car in a pitch-black night, along a road raked by shell-fire and broken here and there into great pits, to fetch a load of wounded, a performance that would have racked the nerves of any male chauffeur ever born. She has driven the same car, alone, with five German prisoners for her passengers. The four women are serving regularly now at Pervyse, the town nearest to the firing-line. It is more than

two months since Mrs. Knocker established her dressing-station there in a cellar only twenty yards behind the Belgian trenches. In that cellar, eight feet square and lighted and ventilated only by a slit in the wall, she and Miss Chisholm (a girl of eighteen) lived for three weeks, sleeping on straw, eating what they could get, drinking water that had passed through a cemetery where 900 Germans are buried. They had to burn candles night and day. Here the wounded were brought as they fell in the trenches, and were tended until the ambulance came to take them to the base hospital at Furnes."

The Bretons were also said to be wonderful. "I want to thank the little Breton nurse who has been so good to us," writes a grateful private of the Leicesters of the lady who attended to him and his wounded comrades at a hospital in the north of France. "Never," he says, "was a woman born kinder, tenderer, or more patient and lovable. I saw her first in a field hospital, singing a wounded Highlander to sleep rather than that he should disturb the rest of us with his bagpipes. The next moment she would be hunting for a priest to come and comfort a lad who had been shot to pieces, but was still conscious, and was crying for the padre, and when the chaplain had gone she continued to soothe him with those Christian phrases which a good woman can employ with far better effect than any minister. He was lying next me, and I heard her speaking of loved ones he was about to rejoin in the other world when he died in her arms. Later she had to hasten to

another bed, where a young lieutenant is dying—a shell has torn part of his head away. He is just able to utter one word—‘Mother.’ At once an inspiration comes to the nurse’s fine soul; she searches the pockets of the dying boy, finds the photograph of that loved one, puts it gently in his hands. Though blind, he realizes what it is, gives one last cry of ‘Mother,’ and dies.”

Another French heroine was Marie Masson, who belonged to a village the inhabitants of which, though only civilians, had resisted the German advance. The Germans were driven off, but they came back. They returned on November 9th, “drove all of us into the church”—said the informant—and an officer, standing by the altar, announced in guttural French that the village was to be punished. “A woman,” said he, “betrayed us by telling us there were no French troops in the place, whereas the houses must have been full of them; if she doesn’t confess we shall kill every inhabitant.” Groans filled the church. Cries were raised that if the “piou-pious” were in the village they certainly were not hiding in the houses. The officer would not believe them, and proceeded to announce that as an example and a warning he would have a man and a woman shot in the presence of the population.

At this point up stepped Madame Marie Masson, twenty-eight years old, who had a husband and two brothers with the colours. She turned her face to the German officer and the altar, and said, “There were no French in the houses, but here am I; take me, and do your worst.” The German

soldiers thereupon seized her and an old man who stood by her. Everybody was ordered out of church. The couple were marched away and placed against a wall, while the German troops surrounded the inhabitants and compelled them to witness the double execution.

The German officer in a loud voice asked if the father and mother of the young woman were in the crowd. They came forward and were forced to remain in the forefront of the populace, so that they might miss nothing of their daughter's last moments. Eight constituted the firing party, and in all sixteen shots were fired. The pair died, unbandaged, facing death without flinching.

A happier story is that told in relation to the work performed by the English Yeomanry Corps of Nurses in France. The Belgian nurses were being continually shelled, but one of them went steadily backwards and forwards—even after a shell had burst within twenty yards of her, killing three men and wounding several others. Finally the officer in charge of the section was so touched, that, lacking any other way of showing his gratitude, he picked a few snowdrops which were growing on a little ledge in the trench, and, making up a bouquet, gravely presented them to her.

No doubt most, if not all, of these stories are common knowledge to our readers ; the facts have certainly been set out in the newspapers, but linked together here they revive our recollections of women's gallant deeds. They also serve as proof that the warring nations have good reason to be proud of their " heroines of the firing-line."

## CHAPTER VI

### MOTHERING THE BRITISH SOLDIER

**T**HERE are many ways of mothering our soldiers, and the women of England soon made up their minds that not one of these ways should remain untried. "It's enough for me if a soldier wants them. I don't care whether they're cigarettes or mouth-organs!" Thus spoke a committee member, who owns a very illustrious name, when challenged one day by a worker who wished to concentrate on woolly comforts and thought tobacco and musical instruments rather a waste of public money. The kindlier idea, however, has found general support since the war broke out.

In the main, women have a very generous and friendly idea of setting about this work of mothering. The soldier is not to be given only what he ought to appreciate and require. He is to have, so far as it is in their power to give it, whatever will help to make him happy and to keep him content.

The Prince of Wales' Fund and the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families' Association, two Funds that have been working hand in hand since August, 1914, have been doing a big share of the "mothering" of the wives and families left behind.

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The Prince of Wales' Fund from the first knew no restrictions. It sought to look after the home interests of the fighting men in whatever way seemed most necessary, and it insisted that hardship was not to be thought of for the people left behind in a soldier's home.

With the sudden coming of war an unbearable strain was put upon the War Office pay-machinery and staff. It was a sheer impossibility to meet the requirements of our soldiers' dependents through the ordinary channels. Consequently there would have been serious hardship to be faced in many a town and village had it not been for the timely aid of these two important funds. The National Relief Fund, called by the name of the Prince who is away on French soil with his soldier comrades, is in the hands of a committee who are helped by women-workers who give their ready service in every part of the country, getting into touch with the soldiers' families and finding out exactly what is most urgently wanted.

The Prince maintains a keen personal interest in the Fund. One month he sent in three hundred francs, money that had been given to him "somewhere in France," the proud offering of some villagers who had held a Flag Fair, and sold small ensigns in aid of the Fund.

The Soldiers' and Sailors' Families' Association had an intimate knowledge of the needs of the dependents of our fighting men, born of long years of useful work in practically every parish in the kingdom. Therefore the Association was able to render invaluable assistance in this time of



crisis, and large sums of money were allocated from the Prince's Fund to be distributed through this old-established organization, so as to meet immediate necessities and to tide homes over the interval that was bound to elapse before the War Office could cope with a truly overwhelming state of affairs.

Queen Alexandra is President of the Council of the Association. She wrote a very moving appeal to the nation in the early days of the war, saying how near to her heart was the desire to help the families of our fighters in every way possible and to lessen the hardships that must inevitably come to them. So when, in its effort to reach the need wherever it existed, the Prince's Fund asked the aid of the Families' Association, the leaders had a conference. They went over the ground together to avoid overlapping, and Queen Alexandra paid a little informal visit to the head-quarters of each Fund, "gracefully to join our hands," as it was put by one committee member who received the Queen-Mother on that occasion.

Her Majesty showed her usual thorough-going interest in all that was brought to her notice, and examined, with approval, a silver watch that had been sent by a poor contributor who had nothing else to give and would like the watch to be sold for the Fund. Queen Alexandra promptly purchased it, handing over £4 to the Relief Fund. "And now, please, send it back to the donor from me," she said, and was visibly distressed when told that no address had been left with the gift.

On Salisbury Plain Lady Smith-Dorrien had

families to "mother." She has always been a very active worker in connection with the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families' Association, and she found homes on behalf of the Association, with the funds entrusted to her by the Government for this purpose, for all the women and children in her husband's command who had been turned out of barracks to make room for the men of Lord Kitchener's Army and for the Canadian Contingent.

Lady Radnor and Lady Pembroke looked after the dependents of the New Army men and the Reservists, while Lady Smith-Dorrien took the families of the Regulars under her special care. It was a huge task to find cottage homes all over the country for these people suddenly turned out of quarters. But it was work that Lady Smith-Dorrien, for one, very thoroughly enjoyed.

"The quarters were cleared at once," she said, "and my husband's men, when they reached the Front, did not know even where to address their letters to find their wives! Sir Horace told them that if they would direct the letters to me at the office in Salisbury I would see that all such communications really found their way to the new home wherever it might be, which meant, of course, that for a while we did Post Office work."

All this clerical labour was welcomed cheerfully by Lady Dorrien and the wives of her husband's staff officers, who frequently sat far into the morning hours wrestling with heavy and ever increasing mails.

Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein, who

has worked hard as the President of the Incorporated Soldiers' and Sailors' Help Society, is now anxious to enlarge considerably the work-rooms of the Society. There men who have been partially disabled on active service are taught new trades and helped to hold their own afresh in the workaday world. It is proposed to make the extension of these workshops a memorial to Earl Roberts, and the appeal made with this in view is meeting with an eager response. The Prince's Fund has granted substantial sums towards this object.

Very often nowadays a soldier away at the battle-front gets a budget from his wife at home wherein the paper on which she writes is gay with little flags and patriotic headings, and she tells him of a jolly, homely club, where she can go and come when and how she likes. And often she goes on to describe the good times women have together in that big, cheerful room, and how when there's anything that puzzles her about her allowance or about the children, or some question of difficulty in getting a parcel out to him at the Front, all these things are explained to her by "the ladies" who visit the club.

A soldier inevitably feels that this is some more of the right sort of "mothering" as he reads about these war clubs. There the women have singing and games, and gossip, and plenty of opportunity to sew or knit, with materials at cost price, but no compulsion to work if they would rather sit and chat, or read the papers. Then there are good meals at next to no cost. A penny

seems to be the tariff charge for almost anything—a bowl of soup, or whatever the club member fancies; but the best pennyworth of all is the tea. For having paid your penny you may have just as many cups as you wish!

Lady French has opened many of these clubs. Lady Jellicoe, too, and Mrs. Winston Churchill are very keen about recreation huts. But Mrs. Parker, Lord Kitchener's sister, believes in having individual names for each club established. She has very downright views on what these clubs ought and ought not to be. As President of the Women's Patriotic Clubs she goes about the country, here, there and everywhere, opening and visiting the club-rooms, and always taking the women's hearts by storm. "They can't coax her to stick on the platform," said one little woman down at Limehouse; "she would come down amongst us and see the babies, and she asked all about my man's wound. I 'ad to keep pinchin' meself to believe it really was Lord Kitchener's sister!"

It showed characteristic kindness that one day she allowed a specially favoured "camera-fiend" to take a snapshot portrait of a club-room in which she sat amongst the mothers and wives and sweethearts of our soldiers, so that photographs could be sent out to the Front for the men to see. The flashlight explosion was an exciting diversion, and Mrs. Parker was specially delighted when one dear old lady confided afterwards that she had thought it was a bomb!

Patriotic clubs are always a success when run on the common-sense lines that Lord Kitchener's

sister advocates. "Let the women have what they want, not what you want," she says. "Whatever you do, don't give them a concert every night! If they want a song, then by all means let some good lady sing to them, but their clubs ought to be to them what our clubs are to us. I don't go to my club to be entertained; I go to sit about and read, to have a meal, to write a few letters, to talk to my friends." This is one reason why she likes individual names—the Britannia Club, and such-like. "If their own particular club has a special name," says Mrs. Parker, "the women feel more important. They want comradeship, not charity or patronage, and we must be very sure we know how to offer the genuine article."

The women of all grades of society who are nursing our wounded are doing a splendid share of the "mothering," and so, too, are those who take the wounded for drives in easy-running motor-cars, or ask the convalescents to stay for a while in some country home where fresh air can do its re-invigorating work. Many famous homes are lent to the authorities for this purpose. Eaton Hall, where in normal times the Duke of Westminster entertains gay house-parties for hunt-balls and shooting, has been filled to overflowing with soldier patients ever since the arrival of the first contingent of wounded. The Duke is in France at the head of a squadron of armoured motors, and the Duchess is fully occupied with her hospital at Le Touquet.

Many injured officers are housed in Highclere

Castle, the home of the Earl and Countess of Carnarvon. And again, the Grand Duke Michael of Russia is another who has generously put his house at the service of the wounded. Ken Wood, the Grand Duke's Hampstead mansion, is the head-quarters of the "Mitten Brigade." Gloves and mittens by the thousand have been despatched by the Grand Duke, his wife the Countess Torby, and their youthful daughters. They arranged, with the aid of some stage friends, a benefit performance humorously described as a *Mittenee*.

Queen Alexandra was present in the crowded theatre, and the proceeds from that one afternoon's entertainment sent many thousand warm pairs of gloves to the men at the Front.

In the way of woolly comforts, nothing has been forgotten. Socks, shirts, mufflers, mittens, cardigan coats, Balaclava sleeping helmets, and those useful body belts which our soldiers irreverently, but not the less appreciatively, nicknamed the "dado round the dining-room." In the Queen's workrooms, and in those kept going by Lady French, sewing-machines and knitting-needles are still flying at lightning speed. Lady Jellicoe, Lady Carnwath, and others have gathered many comforts for the men of the Fleet, and from the head-quarters of the Primrose workers, where Lady Milman is Chairman of the Needlework Committee, hosts of comforts have been despatched to our fighters abroad on land and sea.

Most of us know the story of the Tommy who, when asked what life in the trenches was like, replied airily, "Oh, you've no idea! Up to the

knees in mud and mufflers." But though women laughed, their knitting-needles never paused a moment. They recognized that of course mufflers must be lost and discarded in the exigencies and heat of battle. That is why they must knit all the faster, so that for every muffler that gets trampled in the mud there shall be another warm wrap at the base ready for distribution.

An orderly who went out with Viscount French at the very beginning of the war was sent back to England in October, 1914, to deliver over a lamed charger of the General's into the care of Lady French at the Manor House at Waltham Cross. With motherly solicitude Lady French made enquiries about the state of this soldier's wardrobe. He had "no complaints"—they never have!—but after much questioning she found out one or two things that made her more eager than ever to hurry off those big parcels of comforts piled up in her husband's study.

"Do you know," she exclaimed, "that soldier had on the same pair of socks that he wore when he left England!"

Special national efforts have been made for Scottish, Welsh, and Irish soldiers, their own compatriots taking a jealous pride in supplying every possible want in the same generous fashion as the City of London cares for its own troops.

The historic rooms at 11, Downing Street, before the appointment of the Minister of Munitions and his subsequent removal to the new home in Whitehall Gardens, told the same tale of the mothering instinct that possesses the women of

our land. Mrs. Lloyd George, whose two sons hold commissions in Welsh regiments, has busied herself very earnestly to further the efforts being made by Welsh women in Wales and here in England; and in the Munition Minister's London house, huge parcels of comforts for the fighters who proudly wear the leek, are packed and despatched.

English people have always thought Welsh a puzzling and elusive language, but not all of us knew that even Welsh folk find it a trifle appalling to write. Most of the garments sent to Downing Street last winter had little letters attached, and hardly any of these were written in Welsh! When this was remarked upon, a Welsh worker explained that speaking Welsh was one thing, writing it another! Few indeed, she said, even of the educated classes in Wales, care to write the language which they love to talk.

The Indian soldiers are not forgotten, and in their parcels of comforts are included weird and wonderful sweetmeats, instead of the chocolates and peppermints we send to our own British soldiers, for the wives of officers who have served under Indian skies are able to explain just what these Orientals most appreciate in the way of comforts, as well as to give advice as to specially suitable garments.

The mine-sweepers are remembered too, and the Royal Flying Corps has an Aid Committee all its own, every member of which is the wife or relative of one of our brave aerial fighters. While Brigadier-General Sir David Henderson, the head



of the Royal Flying Corps, is earning the outspoken admiration of the authorities for his magnificent work of reconnaissance, his wife Lady Henderson is remembering the needs of our airmen and directing the comfort-sending contingent at home.

Footballs, gramophones, sweets, cigarettes, anything and everything that our soldiers are likely to fancy, is finding its way to the grateful men at the front. And the Empress Club, just recently, was clever enough to discover yet another acceptable gift. The Emergency Voluntary Aid committee of this well-known club for women, has started a scheme for sending out small galvanized iron baths with furnaces and boilers attached. The idea is to have these forwarded as close up to the firing-line as is possible. They have been tremendously appreciated by the men. The surprise and delight of the soldiers, just released from a spell in the trenches, knew no bounds when they found these baths "dropped down from the skies!" Here was luxury they had not dreamed of! "After wallowing in trench-mud for a fortnight," said one of these lucky men, "to soak in a hot bath is like Paradise the blest."

So it goes on. Always thought for the soldiers' comfort—planning, giving, sewing, praying. It's a long story this tale of the waiting women who sew and knit untiringly; a homely narrative that hardly lends itself to graphic treatment. There is no glamour or excitement about the cult of the knitting-needle, and as the months drag by even

the novelty of it all that buoyed us up at starting, wears off into a dull, enduring ache. But the workers with mother-hearts keep on. They don't ask for any limelight—it is not the English way. It's enough if our gallant lads at the Front are kept reminded that here at home we are working for them. We used to think knitting was dull as ditch-water, but now it is our joy in life! The old Grannie who, in the days before the war, would have told you her sight was so bad she was bound to drop stitches, and the bright-faced young girl who hadn't a thought above Tango teas, are racing each other now with the mufflers! And why? Not at the freakish dictates of any fashion, but at the call of the mothering instinct.

Why did Wendy think it so homely and sweet to have a stocking to darn when she mothered the dear lost boys? There isn't any answer, for there are no words to express the thought behind it all. But the wonderful mother-thought is there, and the echo is sounded in the rain-sodden trenches under the blinking stars in the long night watches, when Tommy's heart grows warm and glad at the thought of home.

## CHAPTER VII

### OUR BELGIAN GUESTS

**T**HE ebb of fighting men from this country to the scene of warfare, or to outposts of the Empire, was for some months after the outbreak of the war matched by a steady incoming tide of refugees from Belgium and Northern France.

All had to be cared for, sheltered, and fed. Permanent homes were secured where the families could be housed together ; schools were opened to the children ; and frequently work of a similar nature to their own home employments was found for the men. The whole formed a truly colossal task, and it was gallantly shouldered by the War Refugees Committee, which was founded at the beginning of the war. Of the 300,000 registered refugees now in this country, two-thirds were ministered to and settled in permanent homes by the Committee. That every possible need of every possible type of refugee was met by the officials of this organization, shows the many-sidedness of these indefatigable workers.

The work of the Transport Department was, perhaps, the most interesting, for it was this branch which saw the first and last of the refugees. It sent voluntary workers and interpreters to

meet every Belgian boat train, no matter at what hour of the day or night it might arrive. When the train disgorged its load of miserable people, terror-stricken, hungry, cold, despairing, often at midnight, or even at two o'clock in the morning, the dreary crowds were taken in charge by the Committee's officials. They were conveyed to the temporary shelters provided for the night—sometimes Government dépôts, sometimes hotels—given food and hot coffee, and reassured and consoled by tactful helpers who spoke their own language.

The next day, when a night's sleep had had its restoring effect, they were brought to the Transport Department's offices. There identification particulars were noted, and permanent hospitality in some part of the country was arranged for. Railway passes were given out, and interpreters provided to act as travelling escorts and smooth all the difficulties of an unknown tongue. Or, perhaps, no suitable home offered itself immediately to them. Then the little family was sent to some dépôt, where, with thousands of others in like case, they were cared for until they could be placed in a private family, a furnished house, or hostel. Seldom had they long to wait, for the debt of Britain is and has been always fresh in every English heart, and from all quarters offers of hospitality poured in day after day and week after week.

These offers came in many forms, according to the circumstances and means of those who made them. Many people with good-sized houses

and a room or two to spare took a small family into their homes, providing them with everything they needed, asking no credentials except that their guests were unfortunate, expecting nothing but that the refugees should settle down as happily as possible. It was no light thing thus to take into one's household for a quite indefinite period people of whom the head knew practically nothing, people of alien blood and language, who had been used to very different methods of living. That thousands of families in all parts of the country, except those areas prohibited for aliens, did so willingly and even eagerly, is a proof of England's desire to pay the heavy debt she owes.

In those cases there was no stint, no half-hearted giving. Although it meant two or three extra people to provide for, frequently on a diminished income, the guests were given every comfort, supplied with pocket money and cared for in every sense. Often they arrived with no clothes but those they were wearing, and new outfits, fully as good as those they wear themselves, were purchased for them by their hosts. Care was taken to put them in touch with others of their own nationality (in many districts clubs were formed for the local refugees) and to introduce them to their own churches.

Other English women who could not help in this particular way, contributed money or furniture to the many hostels which were organized in different neighbourhoods on co-operative lines. These, according to size, housed any number from one to dozens of families under the same

roof, getting allowances for food and other expenses. Other women gave the use of furnished country or seaside cottages, in which a whole family might comfortably find shelter without need of the much-dreaded separation.

Flats were often handed over to the Belgians rent free or at very reduced prices; married couples permanently adopted little orphaned waifs who had none of their own kin to whom to cling; schoolmasters and mistresses threw open their establishments free to one or more of the Belgian children in their neighbourhood. Others again, unable through force of circumstances to do any of these things, stinted themselves to send cheques to the Refugees Committee, or made much-needed garments for the stores that seemed always in want of replenishment.

Any organization which deals primarily with human beings must needs be complicated. Flour or iron or coal can be dealt with *en masse*, but the War Refugees Committee had to take its units separately, for each unit was a distinct identity, with its own special needs. To those who offered private hospitality guests of about their own social standing had to be sent, or the arrangement was foredoomed to failure. Artisans were picked to go to working class neighbourhoods, and sick people were given medical care and if necessary sent to hospitals. Families were eager about news of their relatives who had arrived before or after themselves and, if possible, they were given facilities for meeting them. Of all the thousands who thronged the Aldwych offices no two

had exactly the same requirements. In addition, there was always the language difficulty, the refugees speaking sometimes French, sometimes Flemish, rarely English, and they had to be referred to officials who were fluent in their own particular tongue.

At the Government dépôts where many of the refugees were housed immediately on arrival, there were arrangements for their allocation, registration, and for tracing missing relatives. Those who were sent to hotels had not these facilities, and the Committee accordingly provided for them at a disused skating rink close to the main offices, which has since been destroyed by a Zeppelin bomb. This place was open all day and every day, and sometimes all night. Hundreds visited it during every twenty-four hours.

Here the refugee who had just arrived was given a free ticket for food—steaming bowls of coffee, sandwiches, bread and jam, pastry, Belgian cakes. Here babies were temporarily left in the crèche while the parents were busy; lost luggage could be reclaimed; young men of military age might enrol for the Belgian army. Clothing was distributed to those who needed it, men wanting employment were interviewed at the labour bureaux, and there was a shop where cheap necessities could be bought.

The place also served as a sort of club and rendezvous, where people exchanged news of their friends, or met quite accidentally some neighbour they had hardly hoped to see again. The babel of tongues, French or Flemish, was

incessant and deafening to English ears, for even in adversity the Continental does not lose his noisy volubility. The air of this place in the heart of London was totally foreign, and there was not a word of English spoken. Even the doorkeeper arrested a caller with a civil "S'il vous plaît, mademoiselle," till she had proved their right of admission, and the many notices that adorned the entrance were printed in both French and Flemish.

Nearly every Belgian worker in this country desired employment, but only in a limited number of cases was it possible to grant his wishes, partly owing to the language difficulty, but more on account of the difference in the labour market over here. The Belgians are good husbandmen, excelling in the cultivation of the soil, and many were sent to the lowland farming districts of Scotland to replace native workers who had joined the army. At industrial places like Letchworth a certain amount of Belgian labour was used in the factories, and a good number of young girls found employment in some domestic capacity. For the professional classes there was practically no opening, except for occasional posts as interpreter or in some capacity which might offer in connection with refugee or munition work. The younger men, of course, could always enlist, and nearly all did so.

A certain number found the lure of their own country, even under German occupation, too great to be resisted, or perhaps anxiety for the safety of relatives, or a flourishing business left



to its own devices, drew them back within their own borders. Repatriation accounted for some thousands, and the work fell into the hands of the Transport Department of the Committee, which issued passes for outward bound vessels and made all other necessary arrangements. But compared with the vast numbers who remained in the country, those who went back were very few indeed.

Wounded Belgian soldiers were another distinct branch of the Committee's work. With nearly all Belgium under German occupation, there were no facilities there for the nursing of the sick and wounded, and many thousands consequently won their way back to health in this country. Small temporary hospitals were formed for their accommodation in various parts of the country, or beds were reserved in large institutions. These gallant fighting men were thus provided with the proper comforts and skilled treatment which could not have been their lot in the ravaged Belgium of to-day.

Though we do not look for gratitude, because we feel that all we can do for Belgium is but the repayment of the great debt towards her that is ours, it is pleasant to know how deeply what we have been able to do for them is appreciated by these unfortunate people. They expected help, but not to the lavish extent to which it has been given. They looked to be provided with the necessities of life, but it was the thought which provided them with little comforts, the unexpected pleasures and luxuries, which touched their hearts.

“How generous you English are !” has been said to me over and over again by Belgians of the better sort who have found havens in houses more comfortable than the ones they left behind. “You give and give and give, and there never seems an end. How rich you must be !—but how generous ! We Belgians can never forget.”

## CHAPTER VIII

### HOW THE WOMEN OF FRANCE HELPED

NOTHING but unbounded admiration can be accorded to the French women for the part they are taking in this great war. From the very first they have realized that the future of their country depends upon their efforts as well as upon those of their sons, brothers, and husbands actually *sur le front*. "They also serve who only stand and wait" may be true enough, but it is not the Frenchwoman's *métier* to stand and wait. She must be actively working either manually or mentally, and it is certain that to her is to be credited the fact that the machinery of her country outside the zone *militaire* is running smoothly if not normally.

All their lives the French have known that this great war would happen, and their women have been consciously educating themselves for it. Even that greatest of all French faults, avarice, is but the outcome of the ever present fear of invasion, of war civil and foreign, but anyway war actually in the territory where they have their habitations. The very fact of conscription, with the absence of all strong and healthy men from their homes for the two years' certain and annual military service, is but a preparation for the women for what may

happen in war time. They knew when war broke out what would be the least that they would have to do.

The actual fact that France was mobilizing was first told me in my kitchen in Picardy, where I found Marie-Rose the milkwoman standing with her large cans of milk at midday surrounded by four or five peasant women and my servants. Normally there would have been an absolute hubbub of talk in that brick floor kitchen with so many women present, but there was dead silence. The women's faces bore that resigned look of those who face the inevitable with recognition.

"What has happened to you, Marie-Rose?"

"My husband has received his telegram. Madame knows; he is of the first (day of mobilization), and I have only one cow and three children; the horse is marked to go."

"It is surely war," said all the other women in a dull chorus.

A little boy put his head in at the window. He regretted profoundly, but he could not carry Madame's golf clubs this afternoon, he was off to help his mother bury the potatoes. The green-man had been "mobilized," and the "pro" had gone already to Boulogne.

I walked up the village street; at almost every house the women were making up little bundles or valises, and the men were getting into their second-best clothes. At the café, usually so full at noon, there were no customers, and Madame *La Patronne*, was wearily repolishing glasses and setting them on a high shelf. "My husband has already gone," was her sole explanation.

Motor-car after motor-car tore along the road to the next town where there was a railway station. The occupants, wealthy men who had been staying at the seaside with their wives and families, were rushing back to arrange their businesses or to answer their country's call as officers or simple soldiers. The little tram that meandered through the forest at uncertain hours had put on two extra *voitures* and picked up the mobilized peasants along the route.

The men kissed their wives, shook hands with their friends who had either to join at a later date or were too old to join at all, and went with the one word "*adieu*." I don't think that the Frenchman, even in those days, had any doubt in his heart but that the war would be one of carnage. He told his wife "six weeks." She answered "Surely." He told his *confrères* "three months." They replied, "No longer certainly." He told himself, "This is going to be long, and I shall come back wounded if I come at all." And his wife knew too.

It all seemed to happen in an hour, and yet nobody was in the least surprised or unprepared. That the authorities were unprepared is another story. During all those days of mobilization I saw no one actually weeping, though many had red and swollen eyes; and what is more—and I would like the fact well noted by reservists' wives and others in the poorer and most slovenly quarters of London where I also saw the effects of mobilization—I did not see one man or one woman the worse for drink.

From that day the Frenchwoman of all classes

took up her burden and has borne it ever since with patience and philosophy, though it daily increases by virtue of both work and sorrow.

I think that it might be a useful lesson for our private soldiers' families to compare their lot with that of the families of the simple *soldat*. In most cases the wife receives 1 franc 25 centimes a day, with 50 centimes for the first child and 30 centimes each for other children. If she earns money she does not receive this allowance. I have personally known very many women who, to their everlasting credit, would rather work their fingers to the bone than embarrass the Government by drawing allowances. Be it said that the neighbours soon tell if a woman earns and takes too. Public feeling is strong on this point, and there were daily proceedings with the police in the early days. Out of her allowance the wife will send regular parcels of food and comforts to her husband, for he, poor man, cannot do much with his few sous. There is a rent moratorium for the families of mobilized men, and after the war the landlord forgoes a third of the sum due, the State and tenant paying the remaining two-thirds.

There is no denying the fact that as an organization the French Red Cross was beneath contempt for the first few weeks—I had almost written months—of war. What it would have been but for *les femmes de France, les dames de France*, and the smaller organizations who worked with the *Croix rouge*, it is impossible to imagine. In peace time Frenchwomen are horrified by the sight of blood, and fly from any malady or unpleasant sight. In war, the

thousands of women who flock from all over France to tend the wounded are a revelation of dormant womanly instincts rising superior to all artificial weaknesses in time of need.

Knowing practically nothing of nursing, these girls and women set themselves to learn, and no position is too humble, from washing floors and working in the kitchen or the linen rooms of the hospitals, so long as their labours help in some way. As actual nurses they have been splendid. A wounded British soldier said to me, "Our nurses are very clever and very kind, but to have a French nurse is just heaven."

But important as the Red Cross work is, it is nothing numerically to what the women are doing in civil life. Wherever it has been possible to keep businesses going they have done so, not only in shops but in manufactories, though often where these are concerned they have had the aid and guidance of the men over military age. The whole of the agriculture of the country, the great beet crops and the grain, have been garnered by women and old men, and the fields have been prepared and sown again for the next year's crops. The grapes were gathered and the wine made. The olives and oranges and lemons and the fruit trees have all been tended by the women, to say nothing of the cattle and the poultry.

Nearly all the vegetable growing and intensive culture of all kinds, not excluding flower growing, has been done by women. It is no exaggeration to say that had the Frenchwomen said as I have actually heard English soldiers' wives say to me,

“ Whilst my husband is serving 'is country I didn't ought to work. What's all these 'ere funds for ? ” the French army could not have been revictualled and civilians would have wanted for food. For instance, no one who has not been down in the South of France can imagine what it would have meant if the women who live up in the little old villages in the Maritime Alps or along the Riviera had not worked as long as there was any light in the skies, denying themselves almost the necessities of life whilst *nos braves* were away.

To instance one town only, that of Grasse. Every factory there would have closed had there been no flowers for perfume and soap, and no fruits to candy and preserve. Those great terraces that since Roman days have been built up the sides of the mountains might well have slipped and the gardens they form gone with them, had not the women and children jealously watched and mended where the grey stones fell away after snow and rain.

All this, of course, was the work of every day, multiplied and made more difficult because of the war, and it is what the women expected to have to do should the men be called away. It is in the performance of feats which they did not anticipate that they have been most wonderful. All that great stretch of country from Alsace to Dunkirk has witnessed so much feminine heroism that no book could hold the story of it.

Here and there individual women have come before the public attention, but those of whom we have never heard and never will hear of personally have been equally wonderful,



There is an old Madame Machary of Soissons who all her life has cared for and been interested in the poor of Soissons near her château. When the Germans came during the battle of the Marne, and the Mayor was not to be found, she appointed herself Mayor, and worked wonders in order to prevent the enemy destroying the town, arranged billeting and all requisition, kept her people from panic and starvation, her crèche and maternal benefits working, stayed on during the bombardment in January and since, and has never ceased to tend the sick and wounded in spite of her sixty-five years.

Sister Julie is another example. She refused to leave the wounded French when the Germans came to the martyred town of Gerbeviller in Lorraine. When this town was retaken by the French they found her still tending the wounded of both armies, and President Poincaré presented her with the Legion of Honour. These are only two out of numberless similar cases.

The women whose names may never be known are such as I have seen on the Marne battlefields who fled before the Germans or stayed in their homes during the pursuit of the allied armies and subsequent retreat of the enemy. Some of these women after the battles found their rooms piled with dead who had fallen in hand-to-hand fighting. These they buried with reverence and as much care as possible, and afterwards put their houses in such order as they could, cleaning and repairing, even in some cases rebuilding. They never complain. They are only resigned. Those who have

suffered outrages, those who have seen their husbands and sons and old men shot before their eyes. They stood it all in such a spirit of patriotism and with such a pride in having been allowed to suffer for their country, that no one who has not seen them could realize or perhaps understand.

I have seen very many who have been for months behind the German lines, and also civilian prisoners in Germany, who have lost all they ever possessed. I have never heard one woman speak of individual loss or suffering. Their only anxiety has been to get their men back again, whole or maimed, and through all the one and overwhelming desire is that there shall be no premature peace.

What a French woman does not know about politics is not worth knowing, but it is wonderful how all have sunk their opinions during the war. As an instance of this there is the tale of Madame —, born and bred in the south and married to a well-known journalist; she was a social revolutionary, an anarchist, and, as some thought, a very dangerous woman agitator. Wherever there was a big strike in France or Italy or Belgium or England, there she was to be found, very eloquent, very forceful, almost worshipped by the discontented. The outbreak of war found her in Brussels, where her husband's paper was shut down. She set to work in the hospitals and forgot all political factions, everything but the good of the country.

As for the women of Paris and the big towns,

they too have buckled to and taken their men's places, even on the Metro in Paris and on the tramways. Above the working and small shop-keeping classes, the feminine world has been concerned in all manner of charitable works, in looking after the enormous numbers of refugees from Belgium and the north and in helping all those in need during the war.

Through all, I think that Frenchwomen find some consolation or compensation in being *triste*. Sincere as their feelings are, they have the knowledge that they no longer dance and sing and frivol, that they do not follow the extremes of fashion; but make the best of their old clothes, and when new ones are necessary confine themselves to solemn colours. They are happy to think that any discomfort or trouble they suffer is for France—France, the actual earth of which is dearer to them than family or even race.

## CHAPTER IX

### HOW THE WOMEN OF RUSSIA HELPED

THE Russian women have been worthy of their men. Higher praise it is impossible to express, nor would the women of Russia care to have their praises sung in any other way. There have been women and girls, it is true—certainly many scores and perhaps hundreds—who have got to the front as men, fought with the enemy in some cases, and always lived the hard life of the soldier without flinching. One Britomart even gained a St. George's Cross "For Valour," the Russian equivalent of the Victoria Cross, before it was discovered that she was a woman, and an Imperial edict had to be obtained to cover this breach of the Statutes of the Order.

For the most part discovery followed early, and the regiments arranged to make a sort of mascot of their particular "heroine" while finding her work, often very responsible and toilsome work, somewhere behind the actual firing line. All classes of the population were represented among these warlike women, from the peasant girls and women to the nobility. The former cut off their hair, donned men's clothes, and boldly demanded passes to the front, and by artful persistence sometimes got them. The higher

classes pulled the innumerable strings of "influence" and by hook or crook reached the regiments they were interested in, ministering to the comforts of officer-husbands or mothering their men.

In the early days of the war these cases were painfully common, but the general sense of Russia was against them, and the soldiers at the front made it rather forcibly plain what they thought of this unsolicited assistance. A certain amount of sympathy was felt for women who took any and every means to rejoin their husbands even on the battlefield, but that was all. The movement, which caused hundreds of schoolgirls to run away from school or home in the hope of becoming heroines of the great war, ceased when the first flush of enthusiasm was over, and the war itself had entered on the uninteresting monotony of repulsing attacks upon permanent entrenchments. As remarkable exceptions to a general rule, these cases of warrior-women are deserving of notice, but a few score among the millions of Russia's armies require no other explanation than the simple law of averages. It was not in this direction that the women of Russia showed their worth.

The day after Germany declared war on Russia, the Emperor of all the Russias made a speech in the Winter Palace to the assembled estates of the Empire. It contained a notable phrase borrowed from a notable source, to the effect that His Majesty felt convinced that everyone would do his duty in his appointed place. And the concluding

words of the phrase were thoroughly understood and have been loyally fulfilled. The men would fight and plan : the women would do everything else. The men of Russia have not failed their country : the women of Russia have not failed their men. The nation is one united power, and the progress of the war has already demonstrated the power of that union.

The first duty that fell upon the women of Russia was to give their men a cheerful send-off to the fields of death and victory. It was nobly done, and only women know at what a cost. At depôts, in the streets, at the railway stations, I saw off many, many thousands of Russian soldiers, and many hundreds of wives and sweethearts marching bravely with them. At the head-quarters staff, where returns of killed and wounded were exhibited for all, I have seen thousands of girls and women daily assembling, week after week, to know the worst. And in months I have not seen a score of weeping faces, among the classes who make no pretence of hiding their emotions.

There is no doubt whatever that the total prohibition of drink had very much to do with the outward heroism of the women of Russia. It brought new hope into the lives of those who felt that a greater enemy than the hated German was being conquered for them by their men ; it opened a new world to those who stood, with the departure of their men, at a door of life closed, perhaps for ever, behind them. The talk of the women of Russia was, during the trying period of parting, all about the possibilities of Germany ; they bade

their men note well when they got into the enemy's country all that might be useful to learn about the German ways of ploughing and seeding and reaping their crops ; they bade them select good land, and pick a good house for their future home in the newly conquered country. There was never a doubt of the result, for was not England with them, England " who had never gone to war without winning ! "

And when their men were gone into the unknown, the women bore themselves proudly, even before the bulletin boards that broke many a woman's heart, and were very kind to everything in uniform and scornfully bitter to everything that looked like fighting material in civil clothes. Never before in history has Russia or any other country numbered so many volunteers among her fighting men, and perhaps half the credit of that notable phenomenon in a country enjoying compulsory military service is due to the true instincts of the women of Russia.

Within a week of the declaration of war against Russia, the women's work began upon an imperial scale, and continues broadening and deepening as the war proceeds. The Empress Alexandra Feodorovna with her two eldest daughters, the Grand Duchesses Olga and Tatiana, took a course of study with practical experience in the hospital of Tsarskoe Selo, to fit them for the duties of Red Cross nurses. They passed an examination after three months' study, received their diplomas, and donned the nurse's uniform. Other Grand Duchesses, notably the Emperor's sister, the

Grand Duchess Olga Alexandrovna, became Red Cross nurses, and all society followed their august lead.

The movement spread through all classes, and when it was found that soldiers saluted the Red Cross uniform, a wave of extraordinary enthusiasm swept over the cities of Russia: women and girls, if they were not in the war, might at least be of it. The hospital doctors, in a war of such magnitude as no country in history has ever experienced before, were soon in the happy position of being able to select ample assistance of the best qualified by nerves and knowledge, for the nursing back to health of the country's wounded heroes.

But not all are fitted by nerves and knowledge for this trying service; and most have other duties. But every woman in the land could give a few hours daily or a few hours weekly for the great national cause. Their men must have linen to wear, and linen to lie in when wounded or sick. Their men must have warm things for the winter cold. From the Imperial Palaces to the peasants' huts, all the women of Russia were soon busily at work. The Winter Palace at Petrograd, the Imperial Palaces at Moscow, the grand houses of the Princes and potentates of Russia are to-day more like the vast warehouses of Manchester set in a framework of magnificent mirrors, glittering crystal and shining gold. Imperial ball-rooms are dwarfed by stacks of piece goods and bales of made-up underwear; you thread your way between priceless vases and lapis-lazuli tables alternating



with the common things of a nation's needs piled ten feet high on every side.

The beauties of those ball-rooms sitting at common deal tables bend over the unfamiliar sewing-machine so many afternoons a week, but do more useful work in organizing skilled labour and the means whereby it is well paid. Concerts and collections on the familiar "flower-day" lines are of more than weekly occurrence and the energy put into this work is apparently untiring. Great ladies raffle historic pieces of jewellery for the common fund. Collections of superfluous trinkets are urgently solicited, and rings, bracelets, earrings, go to swell the fund. "No presents" is the order of the day in nearly every household. The money that was spent on name-day offerings, on birthday and Christmas presents is exacted for the national fund. Even the children renounced the annual offerings of new toys, and patriotically furbished up their old ones to add to the national needs.

Schoolgirls spend so many hours a week in making knitted things or cutting up linen for bandages. The almshouses are similarly employed. And how many thousands of women in all the great towns spent a whole week collecting at hundreds of well-advertised centres gifts of anything and everything that could be worn or turned into something to wear. The results of this enterprise alone were astounding. The rich sent bales of material and boxes of discarded linen; but the very poorest came along with a spare shirt or an old skirt, and for many weeks after

skilled workwomen were busy patching and darning, cutting up and reconvertng, in full view of the street through plate-glass windows of big shops lent for the purpose.

An army of the magnitude of the Russian, an army that marches on foot for thousands of miles, as the Russians have done, can never have enough underwear to stand the daily dilapidations, and linen is still going to the front in vast quantities. But of warm winter things of every kind so much was provided by the generous recognition of the army's needs by the women of the nation, that the Grand Duke Nicholas, the ex-Commander in Chief, had to issue a warning that the whole of the troops had been amply provided for, and recommending only underwear to be sent in future.

Knitting and crochet needles were in the hands of every woman at all spare moments : the village women were in no wise behind their sisters of the great towns in this work. Shop assistants worked between customers ; post-office and telegraph women-clerks would lay down knitting to sell stamps, or receive a telegram ; ladies worked at home and took their work out whilst visiting. Small wonder that even the many millions of Russia's armies were eventually supplied, and that knitting wool at one time became rather difficult to procure in Russia.

Without organization, however, all this invaluable labour would have missed its object and been wastefully employed at the best. The Empress Alexandra put herself at the head of the huge organization which centralizes the efforts of at

least twenty million Russian women, and will expend, before next June, over thirty million pounds sterling in money besides the gifts in kind. Beginning work in a tentative fashion within a week of Germany's declaration of war upon Russia, this organization on a truly imperial scale received its statutes by special decree of His Majesty the Emperor Nicholas on August 11th, 1914, and was entitled the "Supreme Council." The Empress's sister, the Grand Duchess Elizabeth Feodorovna, long known in the premier capital of the Empire as "Moscow's Guardian Angel," and the Empress's eldest daughter, the Grand Duchess Olga Nikolaevna, were appointed Vice-Presidents of the Supreme Council, and the members of the Council are certain ministers and members of the Upper House and of the Duma, with Red Cross representatives and representatives of the local Zemstovs of all Russia, who are engaged in their several provinces with similar work in aid of the war needs of the nation.

This Supreme Council guides, regulates, and centralizes the whole work of the women of Russia, that is, the work of providing for the sick and wounded and the succouring of the needy in this time of war. The Red Cross continues to administer its own vast organization on the well-known lines. The Supreme Council is essentially a woman's affair, and if the Red Cross be personified as the expert surgeon, the Supreme Council is then everything else—matron, nurses, and Lady Bountiful who provide wherever needed all those things without which the finest surgeon is useless.

But the Supreme Council is something more even than all this. It is in particular the Lady Bountiful to all those brave women and little children who are left behind to suffer when the men go forth to fight.

The State insures its soldiers and sailors against wounds, sickness and death on service or as the result of service to the State. But the pensions for the widowed and fatherless, the allowances for wounds and sickness incurred in consequence of service, and the "shares" of wives and those who should be wives left behind, are not on a scale that can be called a "living wage." The Supreme Council comes to the aid of the needy by adding to the State dole out of its own resources. It likewise takes steps to seek out the needy, and to take care that all who are entitled to State allowances fully understand their rights and how to secure them. Specially prepared booklets of information on these sometimes rather complicated matters have been issued by the Supreme Council. It organizes workshops for special forms of work that can be done by maimed soldiers, and it provides instruction in, and the means of carrying on, such forms of work, and thus enables the crippled saviour of his country to earn an honest independence in spite of his misfortunes.

Naturally these and many other branches of help continually developing cannot be carried out directly by the Supreme Council. It is in the position of the Government of the country for the women's work of the country. The Premier, so to speak, of this Government is the Grand Duchess Elizabeth in Moscow, whose enormous experience

in every form of charitable endeavour has been gained in a score of years of arduous effort for the good of the people. The Grand Duchess Olga Nikolaevna, eldest daughter of the Emperor, undertakes the Government for the Province of Petrograd and all Finland. The rest of All the Russias in this respect is administered by the Grand Duchess Elizabeth.

Other Ministers of State, to carry on the parallel, in this Government of the Women of Russia, are other Grand Duchesses, the wives of Ministers of State, and other great ladies. These form, as it were, the Cabinet of Her Majesty the Empress, the monarch of this Government of Women. Under these are the Provincial Committees, that is, the organs of the Government in each Province, and under these again are the District Committees which again overlook the village petty organizations.

It is said that Russians are bad organizers. There is no denying that to the practical English mind they are. But it remains to be seen if this charge can ever be brought against the women of Russia however true it may be of the men. Existing organizations in Russia as administered by men suffer mostly from the fact that they are too meticulous and fine-strung, too academically symmetrical and perfect, to command admiration anywhere but on paper. In practice the human, sometimes very human, element makes havoc of their perfect symmetry. The Government of Women, as exemplified in this vast organization, has not made the same mistake.

Every little village committee, district and province committees, all send in accounts of their work and expenditure to the Supreme Council, but I understand they have the fullest latitude to manage their own affairs as best they can. There is no compulsion anywhere, but a very strong and whole-hearted emulation binds the organization together for the good of the nation. From top to bottom men occupy posts of responsibility and do a great deal of the difficult work, but the women rule. Russia has many things to teach the world, but the latest is certainly this admirable organization of women for women's work. There is nothing like it elsewhere, and the universally admitted excellence of the hospital and other accessory efforts in this war on the Russian side is its best advertisement.

Let us now see how the organization brings the public into contact with the army. As I have seen it here matters go something like this. Your wife demands money for calicoes, linen, wool, and other things, and your household is busy for hours every day and at all odd moments with knitting and sewing and cutting out. Servants, dependents, poor relations, and friends, are all pressed into the common service: to these are handed out ready-cut articles to sew, to those wool and knitting needles are given. From time to time a goodly quantity of necessary articles, from sheets and shirts to socks and tobacco-bags, are ready to be got rid of. You then find some more money for tobacco and pipes and cigarette papers, post-cards and pencils, matches and sweetstuff. These

are poked into the gloves and socks and so forth, and your little lot is ready.

You then hire a cab or a cart and carry it off to one or other Imperial or Grand Ducal Palace or one of the great houses of the members of the Supreme Council. We always took our things to Mme. Sukhomlinova, wife of the Minister of War. A lady takes a note of every item and makes out a detailed receipt in duplicate which she signs and hands you. In due course you also get a polite letter of thanks acknowledging your small donation. It is a busy scene, and if you stay a while you will see all classes of society arriving with donations, from the titled rich in motor-cars and carriages with munificent donations of useful things, sometimes bought but generally home made, to the poor seamstress who has knitted a couple of woollen comforters.

A few officers may be seen there on most days newly arrived from the war and working as packers and errand-boys during their few hours' stay. It became a custom for commanding officers to detach a subaltern to the capital to explain just exactly what a particular regiment stood most in need of, and these young men bring with them a welcome whiff of the reality of war straight from the battlefields. But one side of the reality of war needed no reminder from the front—there was very likely death in that very room. The last time I was there the lady in charge that day explained to my wife what precautions she took, for not only newly made things are thankfully accepted but cast-off articles. Not long before, the

young Baroness X., receiving the day's donations, caught diphtheria and died, and there are many lesser but very unpleasant risks that have to be incurred by the ladies who take in donations from all and sundry.

The connecting link between the central and local organizations and the front are certain special trains. There are ten of these constantly coming and going, with supplementary trains as feeders. Three of them are "Her Majesty the Empress's trains," of which one plies between Moscow and the western front, another between Kharkov and the southern front, and the third from Tsarkoe Selo. The two former are fed by supplementary trains and leave at regular times like a line of steamers. Then there are trains in the name of the Caesarevich Alexey and of the Emperor's daughters, the Grand Duchesses Olga, Tatiana, Maria, and Anastasia. Besides these there are "bath trains" and a "laundry train." The former provide Russian baths for soldiers with clean linen on leaving, the latter is specially to wash and mend soldiers' underwear.

All are provided with kitchens, and all alike come back with wounded on the return journey, thus serving a double purpose. One of these Imperial trains, loaded to the roofs with bales and boxes, makes its way as far to the fighting front as possible, having before starting advised the commander of this or that corps or division of the time and place of its arrival. A fatigue party of joyful men meets the train and rapidly empties it, after which the hospital orderlies, after a clean



up, bring along the wounded for conveyance to the hospitals of the capitals and other large centres. The "bath trains" and the "laundry trains" move about the front all the time, and regiments come in as they can by turns to enjoy that Russian luxury, a steam bath. They have a capacity of about a thousand men a day, and the locomotive is specially adapted to provide steam and hot water in quantities sufficient for this number.

There are various branches of the Supreme Council organization at Moscow, at Kharkov, and at Tiflis, the last for the army of the Caucasus. Among the newer enterprises which have been undertaken by the Supreme Council is a branch devoted to the question of setting the Polish refugees upon their feet again after the devastation wrought by the German invasion. This problem is equal in intensity to that of Belgium, and the area involved is twice as large.

## CHAPTER X

### HOW THE WOMEN OF AMERICA HELPED

“**T**HE hearts of the women of America!” cried President Grant. “When will they remain deaf to the call of humanity’s suffering, and unready to respond with sympathy and self-sacrifice? Never—never, until those hearts themselves are no longer open to joy and sorrow.”

When the sound of the guns swept across the vastness of the waters and reached the ears of the women of the United States, it came to them as one of those calls of which the President had spoken—a call for them to come to the aid of the sufferers in the mighty conflict. The response was instantaneous. In every great city in the States women met to deliberate how best they might render assistance to the men, women, and children whom the war threatened to engulf in its devastating progress. A short time later, as each mighty liner entering New York harbour disembarked its American passengers who had been touring in the belligerent countries at the time of the outbreak of hostilities, and from which they had escaped in many cases with considerable difficulty and suffering, there were scattered through the cities of the States those who, by personal narrative of what they had seen and heard, brought to the

women of America a keener perception of the anguish they might alleviate. In New York, Philadelphia, Brooklyn, Chicago, Boston, St. Louis, Baltimore—in innumerable cities—ladies of social standing and wealth threw themselves into the work with characteristic American ardour.

Appeals on behalf of Red Cross work awoke the American woman to her supremest generosity, and it was largely owing to her that, scarcely had thirteen days passed after the declaration of war between Britain and Germany, than funds had been collected and arrangements made for the early departure to Europe of an American Red Cross ship carrying one hundred and fifty surgeons and trained nurses with stores and medical and surgical supplies. Each day the subscription lists were open the dollars poured in, while the number of ladies proffering their services as nurses was so great that hundreds were disappointed in their ambition to render aid.

“My daughter has always felt that she wanted to do something for humanity,” declared Mr. McAdoo, the Secretary of the Treasury, as he watched her departure by the *Lusitania* to take her place as a nurse in a French private hospital. The feeling that “she wanted to do something for humanity” was a common one amongst American women. It was an American woman, Mrs. Ternure, who with her husband was responsible for the establishment of what is believed to have been the first base hospital recognized by the French Government, situated at Château de Passy, only twenty-five miles from the fighting

zone. All the supplies for the hospital—the funds for the establishment and upkeep of which were supplied by Mrs. W. J. Fitzgerald in honour of her son, a major in the Inniskillen Dragoon Guards—were sent from America, and the hospital was staffed with twenty nurses from New York.

Mrs. Harry Payne Whitney, daughter of the late Cornelius Vanderbilt, spent a fortune on ten motor omnibuses, the clothing for three thousand men, women, and children, and a vast supply of medical and surgical appliances, all of which were shipped from Chicago. Ultimately Mrs. Whitney herself travelled to northern France to establish a field hospital behind the firing line.

Among the many influences that have stimulated warm-hearted American women to energetic activity in the sphere of beneficent "War Work" may be included that of "The American Volunteer Motor-Ambulance Corps." This Corps was organized by Mr. Richard Norton—son of the late Professor Charles Eliot Norton of Harvard—soon after his return from scenes of hospital work in Paris. Convinced by these experiences of the urgent need of help for the wounded—often left long hours on the battlefield—his Unit of ten ambulances, collected in haste, left London for France early in October, 1914, on their errand of mercy.

Attached to the French army, and presently vigorously assisted by British volunteers, this small fleet, manned for the most part by a group of Harvard, Yale, Cornell, and Princeton graduates, had developed in November, 1915, to a convoy of some sixty cars working at the front.

Under the inspiring chairmanship of Mr. Henry James, a loyal and generous committee was formed in London to assist the active volunteers in France, so that the ambulance work—their efforts were from the first strictly limited to this—might have the essential support from a convenient base.

The entry of worthy representatives of the great American Universities into this adventure called the attention of American women—as well as men—to the possibilities of co-operation in service dictated by those high qualities of human pity and constructive sympathy which first moved the small band of friends to action.

From the inception of the Corps, many of the ladies who have rendered perhaps the most splendidly helpful service have guarded strict incognita. By the collection of funds the Misses Sara and Elizabeth Norton have given unsparingly of their services, whilst Mrs. Mead's devoted committee at Boston supplied large quantities of medical stores at regular intervals to meet urgent needs of those hospitals in France with which the Ambulance Corps came in contact.

Later on, Mrs. Wolcott's self-denying and zealous efforts in Buffalo, Chicago, and elsewhere produced financial assistance, cars and volunteers on a substantial scale.

From other parts of the United States, from Paris, from the French Riviera, and last, but not least, from the United Kingdom, American women have contributed in like manner, making up an imposing and most valuable total of effort attri-

butable in much to the inspiration of an admirable lead.

Virtue asks but occasion ; and Man's extremity was Woman's opportunity. In the mansion and in the cottage women's hands were quickly busy making garments for the sufferers. Society leaders of the summer life of Newport distinguished themselves by the inauguration of a series of successful bazaars. At one of them no less a sum than ten thousand pounds was cleared after all expenses had been paid.

No scheme was more certain to appeal to the heart of the American woman than that of the wonderful Santa Claus ship, an inspiration of the publisher of the *Chicago Herald*. The suggestion, which was received with enthusiastic approval by the whole population of the States, was that a ship should convey a Christmas present from America to every household in Europe sheltering a little one whose father had fallen in the war. Never before, perhaps, had any charitable scheme met with such general approbation. From the Atlantic to the Pacific shores of America an overwhelming chorus of approval greeted it. The daughters of President Wilson promised their personal support. Mrs. Marshall, the wife of the Vice-President, was equally enthusiastic. The American children were to provide the presents, but the American women were to superintend their efforts and add their own to make the enterprise a success. The United States Government announced that it would place its ship, the *Jason*, at the disposal of the originators of the

plan. Flying the Stars and Stripes and the "Children's Flag"—a flag of snowy white emblazoned with a single golden star, the star of Hope, and the single-word motto "Inasmuch"—the *Jason* set sail from New York on its mission of distributing no fewer than five million gifts among the children of the stricken nations. Hundreds of thousands of nimble hands had been busy over the making of the frocks and woollen comforts and in dressing the dolls that the *Jason* carried. Toys there were in multitudes for the stockings that would otherwise have been found empty on Christmas morning, but the cargo of the *Jason* carried besides no less than eighty per cent of useful articles.

Meanwhile, in London an American women's organization had been started that was to effect a mighty work both in Britain and the United States. One day there appeared in the papers the following appeal from the organizers of the "American Women's War Relief Fund."

"We American women in England, wanting to show our sympathy with Great Britain at this time, have offered a fully equipped surgical hospital, in connection with the Red Cross Society, for the treatment of soldiers and sailors wounded during the war. If funds permit, we are anxious to run an ambulance ship in conjunction with the hospital. We are also organizing a relief committee to deal with all offers of personal help. In the name of humanity we appeal to our compatriots. Please help us generously."

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The letter was signed by Lady Paget, Mrs. Astor, Lady Randolph Churchill, Lady Lowther, and Mrs. Lewis Harcourt. With Lady Paget as President, Mrs. Astor as Vice-President, the Duchess of Marlborough as Chairman of the Committee, Lady Lowther and Mrs. Harcourt as Honorary Secretaries, and Lady Randolph Churchill as Chairman of the Hospital Committee, the organization quickly settled down to work. Subscriptions poured in, and they had not long to look about for a building for use as a hospital.

Mr. Paris Singer, through Lady Randolph Churchill, placed at the disposal of the Committee his beautiful residence Oldway House, at Paignton, in Devonshire, supplementing the donation with a gift of five thousand pounds towards the equipment. Ideally situated, surrounded by broad white marble terraces and lovely gardens, the mansion was admirably suited to its purpose, and with extraordinary celerity was transformed into a perfectly equipped hospital. An up-to-date operating theatre was established, and the reception rooms converted into wards accommodating no fewer than two hundred and fifty beds.

In September, 1914, the first wounded began to arrive, and up to date more than 2000 patients have been admitted, and, to the pride and satisfaction of all concerned, only eight deaths have so far occurred.

The American Red Cross having generously sent two Hospital Units to each of the belligerent countries, of the two sent to England one, with Dr. Howard Beal as Director, was detailed to



Paignton, and the other, with Dr. Robert Hinds as Director, to Haslar Naval Hospital. Later the Committee of the A.W.W.R.F. asked the Admiralty to grant them the second Unit for work at Paignton, thus making the whole of the Surgical and Medical Staff American, Dr. Beal being appointed Chief Surgeon to the Hospital.

On November 3rd, 1914, the Hospital received the honour of a special visit from the Queen. Her Majesty brought with her a present of three hundred articles of clothing, and after visiting each of the wards expressed her delight at the evidences of care and efficiency she saw.

After a year's splendid service the American Red Cross Units have been recalled. The following letter is of interest as showing the appreciation of the King and Queen of the work done in England.

*Copy*

BUCKINGHAM PALACE,

11th October, 1915.

Dear Lady Randolph,

In reply to your letter of the 9th instant, I regret to say that the King and Queen are absent from London, and so cannot receive Dr. and Mrs. Beal and those Nurses of the American Red Cross who are returning home this week.

Their Majesties are fully aware of the splendid services rendered by Dr. Beal in his capacity of Chief Surgeon of the American Hospital at Paignton.

Regretting that circumstances prevent Their Majesties personally expressing their appreciation of the noble work done by Dr. Beal and these

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ladies, the King and Queen desire me to beg you to communicate these grateful sentiments to all concerned, with the assurance of heartfelt thanks to the Hospital Committee of The American Women's War Relief Fund for the generous and sympathetic ministrations which, through them, have been bestowed upon the sick and wounded of the British Forces.

Yours very truly,

(Sgd.) STAMFORDHAM.

The  
Lady Randolph Churchill,  
Chairman Hospital Committee,  
American Women's War Relief Fund.

The ambulance ship which the Fund was anxious to present to the War Office was abandoned, at the suggestion of Lord Kitchener, in favour of a fleet of motor-ambulances for the transport of the wounded from the field of battle to the hospitals. These ambulances were badly needed, and when Lord Kitchener let the Committee know how gladly he would have more at his disposal, they were pleased to be able to offer six, which were quickly procured and despatched to the front—six 20–30 h.p. cars of specially strong construction, each having room for four stretchers and two hospital attendants, or for two stretchers and six men able to sit up. Another ambulance was added later to the fleet, the money for which was collected by an American lady, Miss Grace Nichols, “From Friends in Boston,” which inscription is painted on it.

For the American Women's War Relief Committee there have arrived enormous stores of clothing, sent them by the women in the States. In small parcels from humble donors, in huge packages and bales, the garments have come from all parts. Three cases of clothes were on one occasion received from the women of Darien, Connecticut, through the President of the Darien Women's Civil League, Mrs. Arthur Phillips. Every stitch in those clothes sewn by the women of Darien had, the President assured the Fund, been worked with feelings of love and tenderness for the brave men to whom they should bring comfort. Upon another occasion the Fund received a consignment of seven thousand various garments despatched by the Panama Canal Relief Committee. No town and perhaps no village in the States has failed to make its big or its little contribution.

The American Women's War Relief Fund is a many-sided activity. The Economic Relief Committee began its work immediately on the formation of the Fund, when it was realized that many women and girls would suffer from the non-employment consequent on the war. Workrooms were started, run on the lines laid down by the Central Committee for Women's Employment, where in addition to wages a free tea was supplied, and a good midday meal provided at a nominal charge of 2d. per head. In Islington, one of the poorest and most congested districts, a knitting factory was opened, financed by the Society of American Women in London, where besides many private orders, a contract for ten thousand pairs

of socks was executed for the War Office. In the Victoria Street workrooms a different class is catered for, and many ladies, elderly governesses, companions, housekeepers etc., whose distressed circumstances the revised conditions of employment do not touch, have found a means of livelihood until more suitable work can be obtained for them.

The generosity of American women has not, however, been merely confined to their own Fund. Amongst many splendid gifts in other directions may be mentioned that of five thousand pounds, made by Mrs. Cornelius Garrison and her sister, Miss Randell, to St. Thomas's Hospital, where two hundred beds were set aside for wounded soldiers and sailors.

Meanwhile the cry of distress wrung from Belgium in the anguish to which the pitiless fury of its inhuman conquerors had condemned it, rose shriller and shriller, piercing the ears of the world and filling all human hearts with sympathy. In the "devastated and famine-stricken country," as Mrs. Humphry Ward described it, there remained something like seven million individuals—most of them women and children—threatened with starvation, unless the hands of the world were stretched out in some vigorous effort of pity to save them.

"Women of America," wrote one, "think of it. Think of the mother starving with her children crouching beside her, calling upon her for bread she has not to give them. Let each sob of those children enter your ears, let each pang of those women call upon you to come to their aid. Help,

help now, ere it be too late, now before the cry and the sobs are swallowed up in a terrible silence, the silence of those who have passed away from all human aid."

Nobly did the women of America respond to the appeal of the Commission for Belgian Relief. Millions of dollars—more than half estimated to have been contributed or collected by the women of America—came pouring into the coffers of the Commission. Thirty-eight ships, with an aggregate tonnage of 150,000, were quickly steaming across the Atlantic, carrying in their holds one hundred and twenty-eight thousand tons of food, valued at two million pounds, to the starving people. It was a huge task that confronted the helpers. Seven million mouths were craving food, and it was estimated that no less than one million pounds a month were needed to supply them. The rich American woman contributed of her wealth, the poor American woman contributed of her necessity. Many were the offerings sent not of money, but of produce—the produce that could be spared from the humble farm. Accompanying many of these homely gifts came pathetic notes, stained with the tears of their women writers because of the littleness of what they could afford to contribute.

"I have no children of my own," wrote one. "It has been a sorrow. Now I send all I can to save the lives of the children of others, and I shall feel then that I have children of my own. Some little ones will live perhaps through my help, and so, in a way, be my gift to the world."

From many parts of the States came offers from

the wives of farmers and others, expressing their willingness to adopt children who were left orphan and destitute, or offers of a home for such for three years, with an ultimate return to their native land if it were wished.

Many are the pages of American history recording heroic deeds. Possibly there will be none of which a nation—"great among the greatest of the world"—may well be prouder than those in which are recorded not mighty feats in war, but the countless acts of sympathy and grace of America's women in the days of Europe's trial.

## CHAPTER XI

### IN GERMANY AND AUSTRIA

CONSIDERABLE reticence has been observed by war correspondents in the German lines as to the effects of the war upon German women and German homes, but now and again the veil has been lifted, and has shown that the women of Germany have also borne their share in this war with quiet heroism and courage.

Quite early in the war the Russian newspapers stated that women volunteers were fighting in the German ranks, and the Warsaw correspondent of the Russian newspaper, the *Dyen* of Petrograd, declared he actually saw some of the Amazons. Thus amongst the wounded treated in the Ouyazdorff Hospital, he found seven women who had been captured while fighting in German uniforms. They had been placed together in a special ward and, judging from the nature of their wounds, he argued that they had taken part not only in the rifle firing, but also in bayonet attacks. Later on one of them who had sustained a serious bayonet wound died.

All of them were fine specimens of Teutonic womanhood, and the Russian nurses said that they greatly admired their finely developed muscles, which seemed to indicate that they had belonged

for some years to German gymnastic societies. In captivity they were reported to behave with the same studied and contemptuous indifference which characterizes Prussian officers. They refused to talk of their homes, or their families, but, judging by their demeanour, they belonged to the upper and middle classes.

In Germany itself, a lot of feminine activity centred around the Red Cross operations. For this work it is admitted that the German preparations have been for years upon a large scale, for the Red Cross in Germany is not an exclusively war-time organization, but is kept in practical and immensely valuable operation in times of peace. As a consequence, vast stores were found to have been accumulated when war actually began. The Empress, who is at the head of it, speedily showed herself an indefatigable worker; and a free use has been made during the war of the large numbers of hospitals, convalescent homes, sanatoriums for the care of consumptives, and other institutions that the German Red Cross has more or less permanently under its control.

Almost every German wife and mother, and practically every German woman of means, belongs to the Red Cross, and considers it her patriotic duty to help it. For instance, it maintains several hundred nurses in Africa and the Eastern German possessions. At the head of this Colonial division is Frau Von Stephan, the wife of the German Postmaster-General. The general organization is supported by the Order of St. John, of the Hospital of Jerusalem, the membership of which



is exclusively male, and is made up mostly of the nobility, but the actual ambulance service—the first care of the wounded—is a part of the army establishment.

Many of the best German families in Berlin when war broke out gave up their homes for use as hospitals, and went to live in the basements. The Empress promptly adopted the "simple life," and deserted the big imperial palaces in favour of Monbijou, that one-storey house in Berlin, in the grounds of which stands the English Church of St. George. For breakfast there was served to her tea and an egg ; and for lunch soup, fish or meat, a simple sweet, and cheese ; and dinner was equally unostentatious and plain. Potatoes were served in their jackets, and no bread was used, except the coarse war bread, the bulk of which was potato flour.

The birthday of the Empress, however, was kept with state on October 22nd, 1914. Every large building was decorated with the German flag, and at night the principal buildings, including that occupied by the "War Cabinet," were especially illuminated. All the morning Generals came rolling up in touring cars to pay their homage and offer congratulations. And about noon the Crown Prince and staff arrived by motor from his army's head-quarters, the Crown Prince on the front seat next to the chauffeur. The only warlike note in the day's picture was a German military aeroplane that flew round at a high altitude.

The German military authorities also had invaluable help from the Vaterlandischer Frauen-

Verein, the National Ladies' Association. With a branch organization in every city of the Empire, it had enrolled the women of Germany for important municipal activities that have rightly attracted the attention of sociologists throughout the world. It ran infant welfare stations, crèches, maternity wards, and a dozen other departments of social service, but as its director, Frau Hanna Kruger, told a correspondent :

“ At the war-call of the Emperor, all this was changed. The moment our assistance was needed, we gave it freely for national defence. With a membership of thousands of women, trained in first aid to the injured, we became an auxiliary of the army with our army's zeal and determination. Thus at our head-quarters, the Cecilienhaus, we found that we could accommodate a dozen officers in a room we had previously devoted to babies ; we put cots for a hundred men in the room beyond where we were serving meals to expectant mothers ; altogether there we nurse 500 soldiers.”

The women of Austria-Hungary, from royal blood to peasant, are all doing their share bravely, unflinchingly, in this frightful nightmare of endless agony.

## CHAPTER XII

### AID FROM THE COLONIES

A SIGNIFICANT story is told by a young Australian lady who chanced to be in Berlin at the time of the outbreak of war. Presenting herself at police head-quarters in order to comply with the notice issued by the authorities, requiring all British persons to register themselves, she was informed by the officials that as she was an Australian, there was no necessity for her to do so, Australia being, in their opinion, not an integral part of the British Empire. The young lady indignantly persisted that it was, and at last, with the remark, "Well, if you will insist that you are British, all right," the official entered the name in his register of what he evidently thought a very obstinate and deluded young lady.

Germany was very quickly to discover how remarkably British the Australians and Canadians were. Even while this incident was taking place, the sons of Canada and Australia were hurrying to offer their services to the Mother-Country, and Canadian and Australian women were bestirring themselves in her aid.

A week had scarcely elapsed since the declaration of war before the British Admiralty received the first proof of Canadian women's devotion to

the Empire. It came in the shape of the following telegram from the Duchess of Connaught :

“ Women of Canada anxious to offer hospital ship to British Navy. Before starting fund anxious to know whether such offer would be acceptable.

Louise Margaret Duchess of Connaught.”

The offer was accepted with “deep appreciation,” but it was later suggested that, as the number of hospital ships was already sufficient, the gift might take the form of a naval hospital at Haslar, near Portsmouth, to be named “The Canadian Women’s Hospital.” With what enthusiasm the women of Canada entered upon their patriotic task, may be gathered from the fact that the Duchess was able later to remit no less a sum than two hundred and eighty-two thousand dollars, with the request that part of the sum should be devoted to the Canadian Women’s Hospital at Haslar, and the rest to a Canadian Women’s Military Hospital, to be established wherever the War Office might desire.

“ This gift,” wrote the President of the Fund, “ is the expression of our love and loyalty to our King and Empire, and our undying gratitude to the brave men who are fighting for the vindication of our honour among the nations, for the advancement of civilization, for the freedom of our Empire, and for the safety of our homes.”

Where the military hospital should be located was quickly decided by the offer of Sir Arthur and Lady Markham, to place at the disposal of the association their beautifully situated country

house at Shorncliffe, four miles from Folkestone. Canadian women in London and ladies associated with the Dominion vigorously identified themselves with the efforts of their sisters beyond the seas, in the good work. The Marchioness of Donegal, Lady Strathcona, Lady Kirkpatrick, Charlotte Lady Napier, Lady Mason, Mrs. J. R. Carswell, Mrs. Vrooman, Mrs. Hugh Allan, Mrs. L. S. Amery, Mrs. G. H. Pailey, Mrs. Maclaren Brown, Mrs. Donald Armour, and many other ladies well known in Canadian circles in London, made large donations or acted as collectors. The hospital was inaugurated at an opportune time. A number of trained Canadian nurses chanced to be in Britain on their holidays, and at once volunteered their services.

These naval and military hospitals were only the first of Canada's magnificent services rendered to the sick and wounded. Mr. Astor lent his beautiful residence at Cliveden, near Taplow, to be converted into the Duke of Connaught's Hospital by the Canadian Red Cross Society, and staffed with Canadian doctors and nurses. They were kept busy, for the hospital, when enlarged had accommodation for no fewer than five hundred patients. But Canadian doctors and nurses desired also to render services nearer the front. As a result, the golf hotel at Le Touquet became a hospital, where Canadian nurses tended no fewer than four hundred wounded men. Another was established at Dinard, one of the most luxurious hotels being secured for the purpose, while field hospitals were organized closer to the fighting line.

"I shall write to my father telling him what wonderful work I have seen being done here," said the Prince of Wales at the close of a visit paid to the Le Touquet Hospital. Canadian doctors and nurses had indeed proved themselves wonderful ministers to the crushed victims of war. At Dinard Hospital, out of seven hundred cases of wounded men, only four died.

"If we cannot fight, we can take care of those who fight for us," declared one of Canada's foremost women, and the women of Canada came forward in hundreds to prove how true were her words. So many were the offers of service as nurses, that when one hundred were needed to proceed to the war with the first Canadian army division, the work of selection was difficult. Special nurses were sent to tend the sick at Salisbury Plain, and ever since the beginning of the war, Canadian nurses have won the devoted admiration of the French by their labours in the hospitals of Paris.

"We need forty-two nurses," stated the organizers of the McGill University Hospital. The intimation resulted in no fewer than one hundred and fifty skilled nurses volunteering for service.

War works havoc in the ranks of the tenders on the sick and wounded. Nerve-racking as the nurse's occupation in war might seem, medical men report that it is marvellous how few nurses succumb to nerve breakdown. It is the strain of unceasing labour carried, under the stress of enthusiastic devotion to duty, to more than human strength will endure, that is responsible for the nurse herself

being placed *hors de combat*. The ranks of the Canadian nurses have needed frequent reinforcement since the war commenced, and fresh contingents have from time to time been despatched to fill up the gaps.

Wonderful was the result of the appeal for subscriptions to the Canadian Red Cross Society. Wherever there have been sick or wounded in Britain or in France, there folk have seen the swift-gliding, beautifully fitted cars bearing on them the proud inscription "Canadian Women's Motor Ambulance." On one occasion forty motor ambulances—twenty for service in France and twenty for Britain—were presented to the War Office. The number has been augmented since.

"Thousands of sick and wounded have looked upon that inscription," declared an army surgeon, "and whispered a blessing on those noble women."

That the voice of starving Belgium should awake an instant response in the hearts of Canadian women was only natural. Special steamers were quickly speeding on their way from Canada to Europe with foodstuffs of every description—potatoes, flour, cheese, salted meat, salted fish, canned goods and wheat. The cargoes of three ships alone amounted in value to one hundred and seventy-five thousand pounds. The news that there were starving babes in Belgium, resulted in Canadian women making a collection of over two thousand pounds for a supply of condensed milk, to be hurriedly despatched to save the little ones. But gifts in kind in no way exhausted

Canadian women's generosity. They were responsible for large sums of money contributed to relieve Belgian distress. Women also played a big part in connection with Canada's magnificent offering of gifts to the Mother-Country, to alleviate the distress amongst the poor. "Splendid and welcome," were the words in which the British Government acknowledged the first of these—the gift of a million bags of flour of ninety-eight pounds each. From every one of the provinces came gifts evincing how keenly was the affection of Britain's men and women over the seas for "the old land," and how touched were the hearts of Britain's women by these tokens of love for their country, may be gathered from the manner in which large numbers of the flour sacks were utilized after the flour had been distributed. The sacks, of grey calico, had on their front, printed in bold colouring, the words "Flour, Canada's Gift." Many of them were converted into pillow covers for the Red Cross hospitals, others were used as mattress covers for children's cots, and others were found to answer admirably as Christmas gift bags.

The distribution of the various consignments of food was undertaken by a large number of Canadian ladies resident in Britain. It was no light task. Four thousand parcels of salmon, cheese, flour, and potatoes were distributed amongst the poor of Stepney alone.

"I only wish that the people whose generosity has made possible this distribution to the poor," declared the Mayor of one borough, "were here to



witness the delight of the recipients, and to hear their hearty words of gratitude."

"Our hearts go with you," declared Princess Patricia, addressing the Canadian Corps popularly known as "Pat's Pets," as she presented them with their colours worked by herself. The hearts of the Canadian women certainly went with their men, as they marched away to glory on the field, and right nobly did they perform their duty to them and to all concerned in the great conflict they had so rightly described as waged "for the vindication of our honour among the nations, for the advancement of civilization, for the freedom of our Empire, and the safety of our homes."

Colony competed with colony to render aid to the Motherland. Our enemies were, no doubt, astounded to discover how extremely British the Australians were. "We are fighting for the defence of Australia in the northern rivers of France to-day," declared the Australian minister of defence, and the women of Australia recognized the truth of his words. Australia's soldier sons leapt forward to Britain's aid, and the Australian woman's heart swelled with pride in recognition of their feats in the Dardanelles. How magnificently they have fulfilled her hopes will be for all time recorded in the most glorious pages of Anzac.

Within a week of the declaration of war, an Australian hospital for the expeditionary forces in the field was being organized and the necessary funds were all guaranteed, Sir Robert Lucas Tooth contributing the sum of ten thousand pounds through the Countess of Dudley, who with

the assistance of Australian ladies in Britain, helped to organize the Australian War Contingent Association. Lady Reid, wife of the then High Commissioner of Australia, became President of the Ladies' Committee, and she had influential helpers in the Countess Brassey, the Countess of Darnley, Lady Talbot, Lady Lincolnshire, Lady Fuller, Lady Coghlan, Lady Robinson, Lady Newton-Moore, Lady McCall, Lady Bosanquet, Lady Malden, Lady Cockburn, Lady Ewinn, Lady Taverner, Mrs. Peter McBride, and others.

In less than a month the hospital was ready and, since it was impossible for the Australian contingent to arrive for some little time, was despatched before them to the front. The hospital had two hundred beds in it and was complete in every particular, with doctors, nurses, and all equipment, including horse and motor ambulances, and, through the Countess of Dudley, the King presented two of his own horses to the hospital to draw one of the ambulances. The personnel of the hospital was almost wholly Australian, and Lady Dudley herself acted as superintendent. Very shortly the hospital was in possession of no fewer than forty motor ambulances.

Meanwhile the agonized cry of Belgium's starving population had found a ready response in the hearts of Australia's women-folk. From one end of the Commonwealth to another, collections of foodstuffs and of clothing were made, and numerous rescue ships were quickly despatched carrying aid to the distressed women and children.

The patriotic Funds started in the Common-

wealth bounded upwards. In a month the fund at Melbourne reached a total of over one hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds, and that at Sydney one hundred and thirty thousand—a great part of this money being contributed and collected by Australia's women. A special feature of the collection was a concert given by Madame Melba, who besides did other work in aid of the Red Cross.

“I hope your concert will be a great success,” telegraphed King George. It proved so, for the total proceeds were close upon two thousand pounds. At the conclusion of it, Madame Melba appeared in a new rôle—that of an auctioneer offering coins and curios for sale. Her persuasions resulted in a farthing fetching thirty pounds and a little Japanese flag fifty-five guineas! Upon “wattle day,” one thousand girls, selling the blooms in the streets of Melbourne, succeeded in raising over two thousand pounds, one-third of which was allotted to the patriotic fund, while the rest was devoted to children's charities.

Very pretty was an idea of the girls of the New South Wales Patriotic Fund. These busy workers, desiring to show their devotion to our Royal Family and the old country, sent, through Sir George Reid, the then High Commissioner, a picture to Princess Mary with the accompanying letter :—

“On behalf of a number of girls and school children who are subscribers to the New South Wales Patriotic Fund, we are writing to beg your Royal Highness to accept the accompanying

picture as a New Year gift from our fund, which was the first patriotic fund opened in New South Wales on the outbreak of the war, and started with the idea of enabling those who could give only very small sums to contribute, our subscriptions ranging from one halfpenny upwards. The total amount received by us to date is £2128 11s. 9d., and we are hoping to keep the fund open for some time. The original picture, which we are sending, was designed by an Australian girl, Eirene Mort, as a gift to the fund, and the frame, also designed by her, has been carved by Nora Weston, another Australian girl, as her contribution. All the work in connection with the picture was done for nothing, and we have not had one single disbursement for expense since the commencement of the undertaking. We hope Your Royal Highness will accept this little gift from the girls and school children of New South Wales as a token of our love and loyalty which, always deep-seated and sincere, are now stirred to the utmost depths by the events that are taking place."

Later, New South Wales women teachers in the State schools undertook extra duties in order to set free male teachers to enlist, or act as drill instructors, a little incident illustrative of the universal spirit of patriotism that animated the women throughout the whole Commonwealth.

"Most deeply grateful," telegraphed Queen Alexandra, President of the British Red Cross Society, in acknowledging a contribution from the Commonwealth which made the total amount

received—in less than six months—fifty thousand pounds, a sum augmented later by many splendid additional contributions. One part of the Commonwealth vied with another in showing its patriotism and affection for Britain. It was declared by one authority that, perhaps, there was not a prominent hospital, institution, and charitable society in Britain that had not shared in the vast stores of foodstuffs sent to Britain from Queensland.

At the same time a novel movement was inaugurated by Australian women for the assistance of women and girls thrown out of employment by the war in "the old country." Why, they asked, should they not find employment and homes in Australia? The four States of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, and Western Australia were specially interested in the scheme which secured the approval of the British Women's Emigration Society, it being hoped to thus alleviate some of the distress arising through the war amongst girls trained for domestic service, typists, dressmakers, and other business girls. Queen Mary expressed great interest in the scheme, and the first batch of happy girls who sailed a month or two later were jokingly dubbed "the Queen's lambs" by their fellow passengers.

New Zealand quickly raised her contingent of soldiers to fight under the Empire's flag. Wherever New Zealand soldiers are fighting, there must the New Zealand nurse be to render him aid. New Zealand supplied its special corps of nurses and furnished its own perfectly equipped motor ambu-

lances, while, under the presidency of the Countess of Liverpool, wife of the Governor, a woman's society was established to make articles that might be useful for the sick and wounded. Largely owing to the energy of the New Zealand women, the Colony was able to make the splendid donation of over fifty thousand pounds towards relieving distress in Britain and Belgium.

From every dominion, colony, and dependency throughout the world, in the hour of Britain's need, have come the fruits of women's strenuous efforts in her behalf.

"Wherever the British flag flies, it flies a symbol of a nation foremost in its honour, its reverence, and its justice to women," once declared Mr. Gladstone. "It fills me with pleasure to think that the eyes bent upon that flag will recognize in it the emblem of a nation, which makes big demands upon women for her love and loyalty."

And never has that love and loyalty been so splendidly conspicuous, as in the recent time of Britain's trial.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE NEW SPIRIT AT WORK

**M**ANY and drastic as are the changes war has brought to our land, there is none more striking than the subtle change which has crept over the British home. This is a change marked less plainly in material reductions, perhaps, than in the spirit of the people concerned. Over cottage and mansion alike, in the heart of London or the most remote country farm, has spread a new atmosphere and a strangely different attitude towards life.

This change takes many concrete forms, according to the particular circumstances of the home in question, but there is no question that to-day it is one of the most powerful factors in our domestic life. The housewives of 1914—for it is with women at all times, and more especially now, that home life rests—had their foes to face as well as the men. And with a high courage, that in many cases is little short of heroic, they buckled on their armour, and wore it as uncomplainingly as they would a silk gown.

The shadow of war, terrible as it is, acted as a scavenger of innumerable home littlenesses. Probably no other event could have done it in the same wholesale fashion, for it is doubtful if anything

else could have touched all classes and districts to the same keen, personal depths. This war is a calamity that every home in the land has felt, and will feel still more in the months to come.

In this limited sense perhaps "calamity" is hardly the word to use. Few will deny that, on the whole, the home life and outlook of England have gained far more than they have lost, in this sharp contact with the realities of war. There may be gnawing anxiety for the men-folk away in the firing line, the pinch of unemployment, and often, alas, the many hardships that are born of actual privation, yet side by side with these ills are the new brave spirit that astonishes possessor as much as onlooker, and the patient uncomplaining endurance of burdens. They form the home contributions to the spiritual side of life in war.

The face of daily existence has altered in many directions. Prices are higher. Wages or salaries are often greatly reduced. The country has many extra mouths to feed. Altogether, apart from the emotional side of things, life is infinitely harder to-day than it was eighteen months ago. Yet never has the standard of courage and cheerfulness been so high.

The universal motto, "Business as usual," covers very much more than its matter-of-fact tone implies, simply because, with the world at sixes and sevens in an altogether unparalleled degree, the running of the home on ordinary lines has become, in most cases, a strenuous task. It is a great cause for thankfulness, and not a little for



legitimate pride, that that wholesome business precept is as general as we know it to be. New conditions of feeding, lodging, and clothing are met with sharpened wits and more patient contriving; the gospel of doing without has made enormous strides since August 4th, 1914.

There is none of the grumbling that attends even the rise of a penny a pound in time of peace. Heavy taxes have been accepted as quietly and with the same absence of fuss that characterizes Parliament on each occasion when a war loan has been asked—and granted without a dissentient voice.

In the home, as in the nation's chambers of legislation, the bigger cost is quietly taken as inevitable. The household expenditure is patiently rearranged on any new basis the times demand. Mother and grandfather and children accept the pinch without complaint—often with thanks to the fates that so far they have always been able to spare enough for the weekly parcel of sweets or food that is sent away to firing line or camp. There is a fine determination that our soldiers shall have such comforts as are possible, even if it means stinting and scraping at home. The girl who exacted of her fiancé more expensive theatre tickets, flowers, and bonbons than he could afford, is ungrudging now in the amount she spends on her air-tight tins of chocolate and cigarettes. In the new war spirit, self-sacrifice is a liberal ingredient.

For many women, perhaps, especially for the younger ones, it is harder to dress shabbily than

to forgo little luxuries of diet. Yet in the department of dress, "do without it" is again the prevailing motto. Of late years many serious-minded people have censured the growing love of fine raiment among our women, but war has proved a more effective deterrent than all their diatribes.

Months ago, when the strife was yet new, and summer was just fading into autumn, I saw a young girl of seventeen or eighteen gazing eagerly and intently into a milliner's window, which displayed a dazzling assortment of autumn hats. The girl was respectably but none too well dressed—she looked like a maidservant or a worker in a small shop. On her head was a decidedly battered black straw hat, and in the window a charming blue felt, on which her heart was very obviously set. A great, clumsy five-shilling piece peeped from between her clenched fingers.

Next door a little crowd had gathered round the bulletin board hung out by a newsagent, and here and there someone furtively dropped a coin into the National Relief Fund money-box, which hung just beneath. The girl I was watching glanced from the hat to the box, and clutched her money more tightly than ever. It was rather pitiful to see the struggle in her face. Finally, she stepped over to the box, dropped in her crown, set the battered hat straighter on her head, and hurried very quickly away.

Truly, where dress is concerned, the change of feeling is immense. It is difficult to realize that the

pretty business girl, who, seated in train or tube, steadily knits her way to town in the morning and back again at night, is the gay butterfly who less than two years ago was contemptuously reported to "put all her salary on her back." Or take the older woman who frivelled away her time in every sort of social gaiety before war came with its awakening force, and wore gowns that were the envy of every feminine acquaintance. Now she is clad in a costume that evidently dates from previous years, and will tell you that with a reduced income and two Belgians to feed and clothe, the amount of money spent on dress must needs be rigorously curtailed.

It is this new attitude that makes clothes one of the few items that are cheaper in war than they were in peace. Food prices go up, because supplies are difficult to obtain, and flour, eggs, and sugar are necessities which at all costs people must have ; but purple and fine linen (with the exception of woollen and certain dyed goods) become less expensive, for they are luxuries, and just now we are all determined to do without luxuries. The shopkeepers reduce the prices of their goods because they know that therein lies their only chance of selling them. This is especially so with the finer and more costly kinds of clothing, such as evening dresses and wraps. Apart from the fact that there are no dances and dinners, few women have the heart or the means for dressing in their best. Even the small minority who financially are little affected by the war, refuse to pay heavy prices for satin or furs, when the money might go to the

National Relief Fund or to purchase comforts for the troops.

One has only to glance through a recent issue of any fashion paper, to see how large a part such economies as renovations play in its contents. Editors have been quick to give the new spirit concrete form, and they are helping women to maintain the gospel of "making do" that has often been gibed at in the past, but which really covers a multitude of little braveries and self-denials. The clothes which one looks for and finds, both in the women's press and in the shop-windows, are the simple, useful garments that everyone must have.

Gay, flimsy fripperies are quite second in importance, and even then often appear only as inexpensive renovations. The seamstress who suffers least by the war is she who for the expenditure of a few shillings can give an up-to-date appearance to an old gown, and so lengthen its life by a few months. Makers of new clothes only have been among the heaviest financial sufferers, and it is noticeable that many modistes who formerly disdained "making over," have now added the word "Renovations" to their signs and advertisements.

The decline of the dressmaking trade is partly accounted for, not merely by the fact that women are having fewer new clothes than formerly, but also because a larger proportion are boldly tackling the feat of making their own wardrobes. This war will leave not a few with a more abiding knowledge of plain needlework than they could have acquired through any other cause.

The influence of uniform has also had its effect in reducing the number and extravagance of clothes. Many a pretty maid who formerly spent half her waking hours in thoughts of new frocks, is to be seen day in and day out in the plain navy outfit of the Red Cross, or the more picturesque equipment of a hospital probationer. These uniforms are badges of honour which may carry their wearer to any and every function, and among those who possess them, it has become positively bad form to wear ordinary clothes. Then too, even in the case of others who have no such distinctive mark, the day's occupations are now of so much more serious a nature, that flimsy attire is largely out of place. With first-aid classes to attend, clubs for soldiers' wives to run, and often the greater part of the household work to do as well, the cooking apron and the dustcap have become far more essential than teagowns.

It is doubtful if, even when peace is restored, the old extravagant ways will more than partially return. Women will have learnt to regulate dress to its comparatively unimportant niche, and the taste for simplicity acquired during these dark days, is likely never wholly to leave them.

Of the unmaterial aspects of the new spirit, it is far more difficult to speak, because they are so intensely individual and personal. The quiet, steady courage that readjusts old ideas of household expenditure and dress, does not falter in the harder task of altering old ideals and realizing new ones. The pangs of separation and bereavement are borne heroically by many women, who

in times of peace were small-minded enough. Little meannesses, little tricks of sharp speaking, evil thinking and impatience, have been washed away in the flood-tide of national perils and necessities.

Self-control is now a universal instead of an occasional trait, and has been shown strikingly in different enemy air-raids and naval disasters. Even children are learning to hush their own griefs to comfort those whose troubles are heavier. The mere playing at mimic warfare has taught them that soldiers bear their mishaps bravely, that they do not cry out when things go wrong. Instilling these precepts into her little ones, many a mother is learning these lessons anew herself, to her own upholding when the heavy blow falls.

At Christmas, 1914, a family met round the dining table, after months of worry and anxiety that had racked all hearts. One place was empty that day, for the eldest son was fighting "somewhere in France," but the festival was to be as cheerful as possible, that all might carry away the memory of a few bright hours. Dinner was half-way through when the mistress of the house was called out into the hall to receive a telegram which had just arrived.

It announced the death of the beloved eldest son. Yet that woman went back to her dinner with a smile on her lips, and played her part unflinchingly all through the gathering. It was only when the celebrations were over that she told them what had happened.

One could multiply such instances, not apper-

taining merely to the few giant souls among us, but coming from the timid and irresolute as well as the strong. The new home spirit reaches the highest in every one, touches chords that in many cases have never been touched before, and brings out unsuspected melodies of patience and courage and charity.

The charity of to-day is a thing to be very thankful for. Only in a great crisis could people give as they are continually giving now, pardon as we see them pardoning every day of our lives. There is an elderly couple in London whose only son fell in one of the early battles. None too well off themselves, the parents have since adopted as their own child a little German girl whom fate stranded in this country. She clings to them as closely as though her fellow-countrymen had not killed their boy. It takes a large forgiveness for such charity as this while the wound is still bleeding.

In little as well as great things the new spirit is rife. The small grumblings that used so often to overshadow a day, how conspicuously are they absent now! Train services are disorganized, the goods one needs can no longer be procured, the streets are yawning caverns of gloom after dark. Every inconvenience is accepted with the stoic resignation that knows such things are necessary and inevitable, with the same resigned calm that attends the loss of a battle or the sinking of a ship at sea. In the plainer vision which calamity has given, small deceits no longer appear worth while, and little grumbles are seen in all their ugliness.

The men of the Empire are abroad, lending their strong right arms to the crusade against tyranny and "frightfulness." And the women, in millions of homes up and down the land, are winning day by day nearer to the new era. With charity and courage and patience, they are making way for the clearer light that shall dawn with the coming of peace.



## CONCLUSION

**W**HAT are the chief impressions which emerge after reading these chapters, dealing with the life and work of women during the war ? One there is of overwhelming importance and significance which dominates all others. It is that when women are given an opportunity, they seldom fail to rise to it.

In normal times the opportunities for women to show their quality, not so much as women but as human beings, have hitherto been limited by circumstances and prejudices. People might argue, and some argued very loudly and forcibly, that the circumstances were not inevitable and the prejudices not invincible, but what argument could not achieve in years war has achieved in as many months. For this, women, who as individuals have suffered so much under the desolating hand of war, as a sex have some cause for thankfulness. Surely after the war there will be less dogmatizing about the occupations for which women are by nature unfitted. That there are some occupations for which they are better suited than others is as true as ever it was, but even on this point it is not safe to make sweeping generalizations. And this brings me to another impression left by this book. There are women and women ! They are

not all cut out on the same pattern, they do not resemble each other like nails under a hammer ! It must be allowed that they have their vocations, and the war has revealed how varied they are. This one may not be able to nurse the wounded, but she can drive a motor, and her ability as a chauffeur serves the wounded in another way. That one has no talent at all for clerical work, but she knows the points of a horse. She has found her war vocation in the Remount Department. Another cannot sew or knit, but she is a good linguist. She comes into her own in the Censor's Office.

These are the straws showing which way the wind is blowing. In future we shall have no right to lump all women together as if they were some curious species of animal, and say "Women are able to do this, but they are unable to do that." We shall have to clear our minds of any cant that may survive about women's physical limitations. No one was ever much concerned about these limitations in the case of charwomen or sick-nurses. And now that the number of women who are engaged in heavy and exhausting manual labour has been increased, we must accept the conclusion that while all women are not fitted for it, some are, since one woman differs from another, as a draught-mare differs from a racing filly.

This question of vocation is very important at the present time, when hundreds of women belonging to every class in society, are flocking into factories, offices, workshops, banks, and Government clerkships, to replace the men who

have enlisted. Girls are being urged to take up this "war work" from patriotic motives. It is a mistake, however, to confuse patriotism with wage-earning, as has recently been discovered in France, where women who have been doing the work which the men had to leave when they were called up, have through a generous error lowered the rate of wages. In England the well-to-do women who are finding a pound a week a welcome addition to their dress-allowance, besides enjoying the sensation that from 9 to 5 every day they are working for their country, do not realize how much harm they may be doing women who have a vocation and training for such work, and moreover have to live on what they are paid for it. This is the dark side of war-time employment, and matters are not likely to be improved until women's labour is organized, and women learn mutual responsibility. This corporate sense has grown since the war, but it is still in its infancy.

All the contributors to this book speak with enthusiasm of the patriotic spirit shown by women in these troubled times, of the fortitude with which they have borne their grievous losses, of their eagerness to make the best possible use of their powers in the service of their country. It is to be hoped that this splendid spirit will not die down when peace is restored, that women will not relinquish what they have gained. Many idle women have learned for the first time in their lives what work means. It is connected now with war, which, for all its frightfulness, is so much more romantic than peace. Will all these women find

some field for their newborn activity when things are normal ? Why is it that men who have served their country and us for years in difficult, dangerous, and disagreeable occupations never interested us until we saw them in khaki ? Such is the magic of the trappings of war ! Will the feelings of fraternal admiration which the soldier in uniform has kindled, be transferred to the unromantic soldiers of civil life to whose toil we owe so much of our immunity from unpleasantness and hardship ? That will be the test. Then we shall be able to separate the sheep from the goats, the women who worked for love of humanity from those who worked to gratify a craving for excitement.

Peace will bring other tests. It would seem as if the war had bred a welcome moral courage in the attitude of the average woman towards the tyranny of fashion. Will this endure ? I do not mean to imply that women no longer care about dress, a consummation as undesirable as it is unattainable, but I think many of them have decided that they will master it, instead of letting it master them. Women have other things to think about, and the fashions have had to adapt themselves to the situation. They do so by being less rigorous in their demands. Have I not just read in *The Times*, of coats, that "they can be very sack-like, or almost fitting : can follow the waist-line or utterly ignore it." There is latitude ! And it has been brought about, because most women now are too busy to learn every new and intricate step in the dance of the modes.

One need not be a prophet to foresee that one of the effects of the way women have worked in war-time, will be to make impossible any renaissance of the old idea that paid work is derogatory to a woman. The system of bringing up girls to regard marriage as the only possible career for a woman, a system which did not even fulfil its end of producing the most efficient wives and mothers, has always been undesirable on ethical grounds. Now, owing to the increased numerical preponderance of women in the world, the system is economically futile. As the percentage of women who can marry will be now smaller than ever, and as a good education and training are as valuable to the married as to the unmarried, it follows that the proper training of women for the many different trades and professions open to them, ought to be one of the chief constructive works after the war. As we have seen in these pages, much has already been done by women themselves, but more is needed than the brave efforts in an emergency of a few individuals. At present, owing to the abnormal conditions, the untrained have no difficulty in getting posts, but nearly all of them are in blind alley employments where there is no hope of advancement, where the pay is low, and there is no real test of women's ability.

This is said by way of warning against hilarious optimism over the position of the woman worker. There is no need of caution when we are speaking of the heroism of women in general. If the essential attributes of the hero are sincerity, self-

sacrifice, bravery, and modesty, as has been said, then many women in many countries have proved themselves heroes during this European conflict. Some of them have found recognition here, but there are others whose names will never be known, whose deeds will never be recorded. To these obscure women whose endurance is a source of strength to every nation, an invisible cross of honour! And to them the Cross is an emblem which has not lost its meaning.









